

THE
KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

Their Rise and Fall

by
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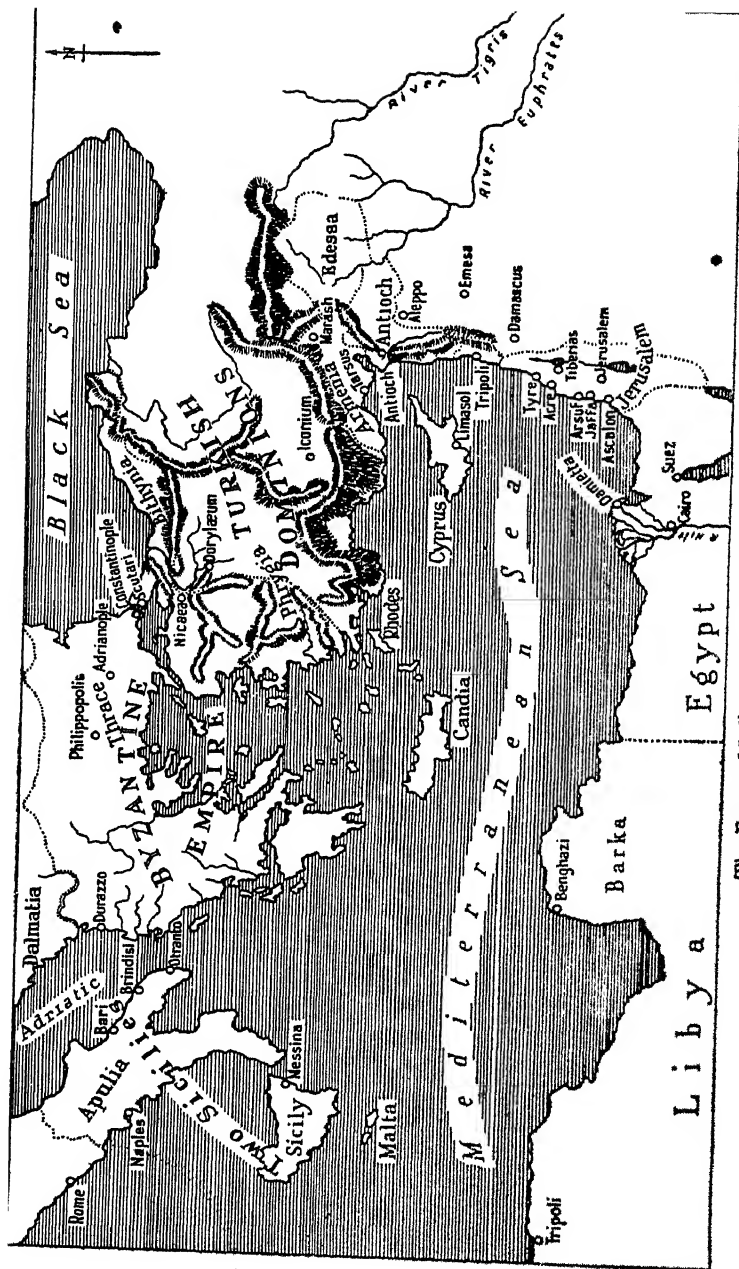
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTORY	7
II " THE POOR FELLOW-SOLDIERS OF JESUS CHRIST " .	18
III THE TEMPLE IN THE EAST	34
IV " THE RULE OF THE POOR KNIGHTHOOD OF THE TEMPLE "	55
V THE TEMPLARS AND THE HOLY SEE	68
VI THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM	86
VII THE FALL OF THE HOLY CITY	98
VIII CONSTANTINOPLE AND CAIRO	119
IX THE TEMPLE IN EUROPE	138
X THE KHORASMIANS	153
XI THE LATER RULE OF THE TEMPLE	167
XII THE FINAL STRUGGLE	182
XIII CHRISTENDOM AND ISLAM	198
XIV THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY	211
XV THE ARREST OF THE TEMPLARS IN FRANCE	233
XVI THE TEMPLARS AND THE INQUISITORS	251
XVII THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS IN ENGLAND	268
XVIII THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS IN FRANCE	291
XIX THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS (<i>continued</i>)	310
XX THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TEMPLE	327
BIBLIOGRAPHY	351
INDEX	353

MAPS:

THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY	6
SYRIA AND THE HOLY LAND	350



The Eastern Mediterranean in the Eleventh Century.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE history of the religio-military Orders, such as the Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights, is bound up with the history of the Crusades. For two centuries after Pope Urban II launched the First Crusade in his famous speech at Clermont in 1095, most of his successors in the papal chair preached the holy war against the infidel with a frantic insistence. The fighting Orders were the backbone of the crusading movements, and of these Orders none struggled more tenaciously to achieve the ambition of the pontiffs than the Knights of the Temple, who acknowledged no superior on earth but the Pope. Yet, after a strange and terrible persecution, the Templars were sacrificed by this Church for which they had battled so desperately.

Jerusalem was won for Christendom by the men of the First Crusade on Friday, July 15th, 1099. The great conquest was celebrated by scenes of the grossest carnage. "If you would hear how we treated our enemies at Jerusalem", the leaders wrote proudly to the Pope, "know that in the portico of Solomon and in the Temple our men rode through the unclean blood of the Saracens, which came up to the knees of their horses". The Moslems "longed for wings to fly away", reports the chronicler, Robert the Monk, "but nature having denied them wings, they could not escape a terrible death". The news of the massacre was received with jubilation throughout Europe, and the Pope proclaimed his satisfaction that Jesus Christ had accounted His people worthy

to regain the Holy City which, for over four centuries, had been in the hands of the accursed Moslems.

Thirty thousand Moslems and Jews are said to have been killed in Jerusalem by the men from the West before the blood-lust was satiated. After slaughter came penitence and the adoration of the fragment of the true cross which an inhabitant of the city triumphantly produced, explaining that he had buried the relic secretly lest the Saracens should destroy it. The Crusaders were called from their devotions to attend to another matter. They had not learned much from their experience during the campaign of three years, but they had been taught the dangers of pestilence. The dead bodies which blocked the narrow streets and decomposed quickly under the July sun were carried outside the walls, and the Crusaders began the work of making Jerusalem a fit home for Christians. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was reverently cleansed, mosques were destroyed or converted into places of Christian worship, and the sign of the cross appeared everywhere.

Some historians see in this Crusade the last of the great European folk-movements; others describe it as the work of a scheming Pope (Urban II), who aimed at restoring the prestige of Rome by a holy war and hoped to bring peace to Europe by diverting the quarrelsome lords to the East; still others think of the tremendous upheaval as due to the craftiness of the nobles of the West, the hunger for land, for gold, for power, or ascribe everything to religious fervour. Whatever the causes of its inception, the First Crusade stands out as an amazing achievement. Cruelty, stupidity, superstition, greed, selfishness, treachery, depravity all form part of the story, but there is also to be found sublime self-sacrifice, the highest courage, and the noblest ideals.

The great mass of the Crusaders were convinced that, in capturing Jerusalem and destroying the infidels, they were performing a divine duty, and they freely admitted that the

Holy City must not be treated like an ordinary prize of war. It is, writes an early traveller, "the holy of holies, great among the nations and princess among the princesses, by especial prerogative called the City of the Great King. She standeth in the midst of the earth, in the centre of the world, and all nations shall flow unto her. She was the possession of the Patriarchs, the cradle of our faith, the native country of the Lord, the mother of the faith even as Rome is the mother of the faithful. She hath been chosen and sanctified by God, trodden by His feet, honoured by the angels, and frequented by every nation under heaven". The priests urged that so sacred a trust as Jerusalem should be given into the custody of the Church, but the Crusaders preferred a warrior to govern them. They agreed, however, that he must be a man whose life and morals would stand the most minute examination. A committee of ten was set up to report upon the candidates. As the choice was limited to the very greatest leaders, possible rulers were few. Some of the chiefs of the Crusade had deserted and sought refuge in Europe, others had founded principalities for themselves before reaching Jerusalem, and still others were either unwilling to serve or had become unpopular because of their conduct during the expedition.

Robert of Flanders, "the Lance and Sword of the Christians", delivered an exhortation in which he stressed the importance of the choice. The ruler selected must, he said, "cause goodness to spread throughout this land where Christ has set the perfect example, must bring the infidels within the bounds of the Christian religion, teaching them our customs and making them appreciate the justice of our laws. If you elect a man unworthy of the charge, our work will be wasted, and shame will fall upon the name of Christian in this land. . . . I beg of you to accept my words with the respect, honesty, and loyalty with which I offer them, and to elect as king the man who, by his virtues, shall be best equipped to

protect and extend this kingdom, in which rests both the honour of your arms and the cause of Jesus Christ". The choice fell upon Godfrey de Bouillon, a man of about forty, who had been commander-in-chief of the siege. The tall, blond, blue-eyed Godfrey would not wear a crown of gold where Jesus Christ had been crowned with thorns, nor would he adopt the title of king; he was content to describe himself as Baron and Defender of the Holy Sepulchre.

Godfrey ruled in Jerusalem for less than a year, and it was a year of difficulty and doubt. The Crusaders had defeated several Moslem armies on the way to Jerusalem, but the enemy had never fought as a united body against the invaders. A few years before the Crusaders advanced into Asia Minor, Malek Shah had exercised sovereignty from the frontier of China to the northern extremity of Palestine. His sons had divided his lands when he died, and what had been a united and powerful empire became a series of independent states under princes who were often at war with each other. The rivalries of these princes had not permitted them to co-operate in facing the Westerners, and the success of the crusading army was largely due to the internecine quarrels of the Saracens.

A few weeks after Godfrey's election, however, several of the Moslem princes buried their jealousies and marched out to rid the country of the Christians. Egypt supplied the main part of the army, but the Prince of Damascus and the Caliph of Bagdad also sent their contingents, and the Crusaders were threatened by a force alleged, no doubt with great exaggeration, to be half a million strong. Godfrey determined to intercept the enemy and urgently appealed to his fellow-leaders to support him; but the quarrels had not been confined to the ranks of the Saracens. Dissensions had shown themselves on many occasions in the Christian army, and trouble broke out now. Only after much wrangling was Godfrey able to collect an army of between forty and fifty

thousand men, and with this force he threw himself against the Moslems. The combatants met near Ascalon on August 12th, 1099, and the Christians triumphed. "The field flowed with blood and was covered with the corpses of the pagans", a chronicler reports happily. "The Christians pursued the fugitives who, terrified by the divine vengeance, had no chance to rally."

It was one of the most decisive battles fought by the Crusaders, and the last for many years in which they had a considerable army at their command to resist the Saracens. For after the battle of Ascalon, the men of the First Crusade began to leave Palestine for their homes in Europe. The expedition had not been composed of soldiers employed for a term of years, but of pilgrims whom the Church had called from their ordinary avocations and who knew little discipline. Many of the Crusaders were attached to no lord and passed from one chief to another as seemed good to them. The duty of the pilgrims had been to win Jerusalem and make their devotions at the sacred places associated with Christ on earth. Having done so, they plucked a palm from the Garden of Abraham as a sign that their vow was fulfilled and turned their backs on the Holy Land. No more than three hundred knights and two thousand foot soldiers remained for the defence of Jerusalem, and among the important leaders of the Crusade, Tancred, the chivalrous hero of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered", alone consented to support Godfrey in the new principality.

The Crusade had given the Byzantine Empire the opportunity to regain a large part of Asia Minor from the Turks; the precarious kingdom of the Armenians had been set up in Cilicia, and three Latin principalities had been established—Jerusalem, under Godfrey; Edessa, under his brother, Baldwin, and Antioch, under Bohemund of Otranto. (A fourth principality was to be carved out in the next few years by Raymond of Toulouse, the richest and most powerful of the

nobles who had taken part in the Crusade.) The Moslems still occupied the greater part of the country, and in each principality the Christians held only one or two centres, from which expeditions had constantly to be sent out against robber bands. The kingdom of Jerusalem comprised no more than the Holy City, the port of Jaffa, and about twenty villages, and the Christians exercised practically no control over the territory between them.

Godfrey de Bouillon died in July, 1100, during an expedition to assist Tancred, who was establishing himself at Tiberias. Before the end of his reign, the Latins had a firm grip on most of the coast from Arsuf to Ascalon. Although Godfrey had less than three thousand men under his command, several Moslem princes had bought peace with him by ceding land or undertaking to pay tribute. That so much had been accomplished by Godfrey with so few men is a proof of the fear which the Latins inspired in the enemy. Before and after the capture of the Holy City, the Franks, as all Westerners were called in Syria, had shown themselves superior in battle to the Saracens on nearly every occasion. The invaders from Europe were more powerfully built, used heavier horses and longer weapons, and the skill and fanatical ardour with which they fought had won them a reputation for invincibility throughout the East. The knights had been trained from youth to charge the foe and engage in hand-to-hand fighting from the beginning of an engagement, and up to this time no Saracen force had been able to withstand the assault of the heavier-mounted Franks and their furious swordsmanship. The Moslems preferred to depend on the accuracy of their mounted archers and the fleetness of their horses to wear down the enemy before coming to close quarters. But the armour of the Latin knights was impervious to arrows, and the Crusaders had been successful in imposing the Western method of fighting in their battles with Islam.

For three months after Godfrey's death, the principality of Jerusalem had no ruler. The Patriarch of Jerusalem—Dagobert, Bishop of Pisa—was an ambitious and thrustful prelate, and in the name of the Church he demanded the custody of the Holy City and Jaffa. Godfrey, he declared, had promised that, if he died childless, the Church should succeed to these places, and the Patriarch insisted that this promise must be honoured. Even apart from Godfrey's undertaking, Dagobert argued that since God alone had made the conquest of Jerusalem possible and as He was its King, the Church, as God's representative on earth, should be entrusted with the government. Godfrey's brother, Baldwin of Edessa, refused to admit the pretensions of the Church. He marched to Jerusalem with 1,500 men and laid claim to the principality. The age feared, if it did not reverence, the Church; but, as at the time of Godfrey's election, most men felt that a warrior was needed for a territory threatened by so many foes, and Baldwin—"a little saddened by the death of his brother", says Fulcher of Chartres, "but most happy to succeed to his heritage"—was chosen to be the second ruler. The black-bearded luxury-loving Baldwin I did not reject a crown. On Christmas Day, 1100, he had himself crowned at Bethlehem as King of Jerusalem amid scenes of the greatest splendour. Unlike his brother Godfrey, he delighted in ostentation and he surrounded himself with all the panoply of an oriental ruler. He adopted eastern dress, eastern manners, eastern ceremony, maintaining a brilliantly-appointed court and never appearing in public on State occasions without a magnificent escort.

Baldwin was called upon to wage almost incessant war with inadequate resources in men and money. He had expected to receive the assistance of large armies from the West, and in 1100 three expeditions set out from Europe about the same time to fight the infidel in the Holy Land. All three, however, were wretched failures. Badly led, betrayed to the

Moslems, treacherously sacrificed by the Byzantines, tens of thousands of these Crusaders were slaughtered or fell victims to disease or died from famine. Of the rest, many turned back before seeing Palestine or ended their lives in Moslem prisons, and of the quarter of a million men who started out so joyously from Europe only about twenty thousand reached Jerusalem. Disappointed in the hope of succour from the West, Baldwin had to rely upon the pilgrims to provide recruits for his army. In the spring and summer, the times of the two passages to the East, great bands of the pious flocked to Jerusalem from all over Christendom to feast their eyes upon the sacred places so miraculously restored to Christian custody. Some of them settled in the new kingdom, but most of the pilgrims remained only a short time in the country, and in periods of crisis the king closed the ports and conscripted every fit man for the royal army.

He never attained the popularity of Godfrey, but Baldwin I is the real architect of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. He was defeated in battle several times, but his record of victories is an impressive one, and he added Acre, Arsuf, Cæsarea, Sidon, Azotus, and other places to the possessions of the Latins. In matters of religion he was very liberal for the twelfth century. The Holy See had hoped that the Crusade would heal the breach between the Roman and Byzantine Churches. They had long disagreed on points of doctrine—points on which the Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church still disagree to-day—but the two branches had only become bitterly estranged fifty years before the First Crusade. Each Church had at that time solemnly excommunicated the other! The Crusade, instead of bringing about a reconciliation, increased the antagonism of Byzantium towards Rome. The Eastern clergy were disgusted with the conduct of the Latin priests, and the Emperor in Constantinople regarded the armies from the West as dangerous to his security and felt aggrieved that

the Crusaders had not surrendered to him certain territories which had once belonged to his Empire.

There remained the Mahometans, whom the Holy See hoped might be brought to acknowledge the Church of Rome. Some attempts were made to convert the Moslems to the religion of the conquerors, but with a lack of success that might have been foreseen. A more fertile ground was offered by the communities in Arabia and Syria which worshipped Jesus Christ but professed doctrines pronounced by ecclesiastical councils to be heretical. Such communities were the Jacobites, who taught that Christ had one nature only, the divine; the Nestorians, who taught that Christ had two natures but only one will and who did not accept the Virgin as the mother of God; the Maronites, etc. Baldwin I invited these heretics to take up residence in his kingdom and promised them commercial advantages as well as freedom from interference in the exercise of their religion. Some of them later subscribed to the doctrines of the Roman Church and submitted themselves to the Pope.

In adopting a policy of toleration, Baldwin was not inspired by the desire to increase the adherents of the Holy See. His kingdom needed settlers, and, as the West did not send sufficient men, he was prepared to welcome anyone in his territory. The fanatical among the Franks would have persecuted the native Syrians, who were Christians attached to the Byzantine Church, as well as the Mahometans and the Jews, but Baldwin needed population and would not tolerate any action likely to limit the number of his subjects. The kingdom over which he ruled was not only underpopulated, but was poorer than any of the three Latin principalities of Antioch, Edessa, and Tripoli. Nor was it the largest or the best equipped for trade, and the Holy City itself, surrounded by mountains, was difficult of approach. Yet Baldwin's kingdom overshadowed its rivals. The Crusade had been instituted to recover the Holy City, and

the territory which contained it had therefore an advantage over all competitors. Even so, however, Antioch might easily have been the leading state had either of the first two rulers of Jerusalem been feeble or had the early princes of Antioch been more fortunate men.

Baldwin had to contend with the opposition of the Church as well as with the rivalry of the princes. He had mounted the throne of Jerusalem despite the threats of the Patriarch Dagobert, and throughout his reign he was involved in a succession of struggles with the ecclesiastics. As the custodian of the Holy Sepulchre, the Patriarch of Jerusalem was a great personage, but Dagobert knew no restraint whatever in his claims and a clash with the secular power was inevitable. Godfrey de Bouillon had given the Church vast lands and relieved it of almost all obligations to the State; but such an arrangement did not satisfy Baldwin, who had been brought up in the Church and had little respect for the priesthood. He envied the wealth of the prelates in Jerusalem; in addition to its possessions in Syria, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre had many properties throughout Europe—bestowed on it by pious persons after the recovery of Jerusalem—and it also received a stream of contributions from the pilgrims who visited the Holy City.

Baldwin was always in straits for money to support the wars of the kingdom, and he demanded that the Patriarch should contribute some of the riches of the Church to the national exchequer. Dagobert protested that the Church was free from all taxation, and that its wealth was required for other purposes. Thereupon, according to Albert of Aix, Baldwin forced his way to the apartment of the Patriarch, whom he found at a banquet. "Your days and nights are spent in feasting", said the king. "The offerings of the faithful are squandered in your pleasures, without thought of our perplexities and difficulties. By the living God, you will not have another farthing to waste on your feasting until

my soldiers have been paid. Jerusalem has been bought by our blood and is defended by our lives, and the offerings of the faithful can be better used than in filling your belly." "Do you think", replied Dagobert, with spirit, "that you can make the Church become your vassal, that Church which Jesus Christ has redeemed by His blood and of which He has given us the care?"

Dagobert eventually capitulated and consented to maintain thirty knights at the expense of the Church, but King and Patriarch could never respect any agreement between them. As Dagobert did not honour his undertaking, Baldwin determined to remove him from office. He brought charges of simony, theft, and incompetence against the Patriarch, and, with the concurrence of a council of nobles, suspended Dagobert from the Patriarchate. Dagobert fled to Rome and appealed to the Pope, who denounced Baldwin's action as irregular and confirmed Dagobert in office. The Patriarch started back for Jerusalem, but he contracted an illness on the voyage and died before reaching the East.

Other Patriarchs likewise fared badly under Baldwin I, and it seemed that the Holy See might have to be content with a very secondary place in Jerusalem. In the year of Baldwin's death, however, there arose the Templars, and in the religio-military Orders the Pope was to find his champions.

CHAPTER II

“THE POOR FELLOW-SOLDIERS OF JESUS CHRIST”

ONE effect of the influx of the Westerners into Palestine was to show the need for a place where they could be received in sickness and relieved in poverty. Centuries before the Crusades, a house had been founded in Jerusalem by the Italian merchants of Amalfi for the use of Christian pilgrims and traders, but the establishment was much too small to cater for the crowds who came to the Holy City after its capture by the Crusaders. At the end of their journey across Asia Minor, many of these pilgrims reached Jerusalem worn out with hardship or disease, or suffering from wounds received in conflict with the Moslems. Many others had lost or spent all their possessions and were penniless when they came to their goal.

Gerard, a knight of Provence, set himself to the task of building up an organisation to serve poor and sick pilgrims. His efforts resulted in the foundation of the great hospital, named after St. John the Compassionate, a Patriarch of Alexandria. The Hospital of St. John was served by men who had taken the triple vows to the Church of obedience, chastity and poverty, had sworn to devote themselves to the ailing and the needy, to live on the plainest of food, and to renounce all worldly pleasures. For more than three generations the fraternity had no other aims and carried out its vows nobly. To the pilgrims the Hospitallers gave wine and the finest bread, while they permitted themselves only the coarsest of fare and drank nothing but water. John of Wurzburg states that when he visited Jerusalem two

thousand persons benefited from the bounty of the Hospital every day, and many chroniclers praise the self-sacrifice of the brethren. There is a legend that Saladin himself came in disguise to the Hospital to test the generosity and humility of its servants, and expressed himself as satisfied that rumour had not exaggerated the virtues of the Order.

At first the Hospital was entirely dependent upon the gifts of the charitable and pious, and emissaries begged in its name throughout Christendom. The institution, however, acquired a permanent source of income within a few years of its establishment. The importance of the Hospital was recognised by the Patriarch Dagobert, and soon after his succession to office he bestowed properties in various parts of the kingdom on the organisation to enable it to extend its work. Baldwin I also endowed the Hospital with lands as early as 1100 and again in the later years of his reign. The example of the king and the Patriarch was followed by nobles in Europe as well as Syria, and the permanent income of the Order increased rapidly. The Holy See also interested itself closely in the work of the brotherhood organised by Gerard, but its interest was shown in a way not very palatable to the Patriarch. For in 1113 Pope Paschal II accorded the Hospitallers the privilege of electing their rulers without reference to the Church in Jerusalem and relieved the institution from certain obligations to the Patriarch. It was the first step in the process of making the Hospital free from all ecclesiastical authority except that of the Pope himself.

The success of the Hospital inspired the foundation of the Knights Templars. The pilgrims who reached Jerusalem in need were now cared for at the Hospital, but no organisation existed to serve the Westerners during their long and hazardous journey to the Holy City. Not until after the Third Crusade did it become the practice for pilgrims to travel from Europe to the ports of Palestine by sea; before

then, the hosts of travellers came overland by way of Byzantium. Once the Christians reached Asia Minor, bands of Moslems, sometimes small armies, attacked these pilgrims, whom they robbed and murdered, sometimes even within a few miles of Jerusalem. The need of guides and protectors for such travellers was obvious, and nine (some chroniclers say seven) knights resolved to perform these services. It is said that two of the original members were at one time attached to the Hospital but retired from that fraternity because they wanted to undertake more exciting and dangerous duties than the care of the sick and poor. Little, however, is known of the beginnings of the Order which was to play so prominent a part in Syria for nearly two centuries.

"Certain devout knights, beloved of God", says a historian, "made themselves the bondslaves of Christ, and by solemn profession and vow bound themselves to defend the pilgrims from the aforesaid robbers, and keep guard over the public roads". Hugh de Payens, a knight of Burgundy and the most notable of the first members, is usually regarded as the founder of the Order. In 1118, he and his fellow-knights were granted a dwelling in Jerusalem near the Dome of the Rock in a property which belonged to the king. The Dome, the former mosque al-Aksa, was one of the most sacred places on earth to Moslems, and by the Christians was believed to be the site of the Temple of Solomon. From their habitation, the knights were known as "the poor brothers of the Temple", but in early documents they are frequently called "the poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ".

The founder-members swore "between the hands of the Patriarch to live ever in chastity, obedience, and poverty", and an early seal of the Order shows two of the knights mounted on the same horse, an indication of poverty as well as brotherhood. They turned away from the chivalry of the secular knights "of which human favour and not Jesus Christ was the cause", and dedicated themselves to "fight

with a pure mind for the supreme King". For nine years the knights had no distinctive dress, but were content to wear the cast-off clothing given to them by the charitable. Although few in number, the Templars were successful in their work as guides and protectors of the pilgrims. Two at least of the nine original members, Hugh de Payens and Godfrey de St. Omer, were warriors of repute who had won high praise for their conduct in the First Crusade, and all of them had a knowledge of the country and of the wiles of the Moslem bandits of which newcomers from the West were naturally ignorant.

Such an Order was new to Christendom. The three vows taken to the Patriarch were the ordinary vows that the Church required from all who wished to serve it, but the Templars united in themselves two functions that had hitherto been quite distinct. They were partly religious, partly warriors; and a fighting force sworn to the Church had never previously been known. The ecclesiastics had hitherto relied upon the weapons of excommunication or interdict to discipline the seculars who disobeyed the Church or had ordered a king or prince to provide an army for the chastisement of anyone who defied the authority of the Holy See. The Church had no army of its own. The servants of Rome were forbidden to shed blood, for the Scriptures proclaimed that he who lived by the sword should perish by the sword. The ban was indeed often ignored, but popular opinion condemned the churchman who fought in battle. Some prelates indeed went into battle with a mace and excused themselves by saying that they merely crushed the brains of their enemies and were therefore guiltless of shedding blood! But while the populace might admire a priest doughty in battle, it was generally felt inconsistent and undignified for a prelate to bear arms, and the Holy See had frequently forbidden the practice. The Templars did not make any excuse for combining war with

religion. They were the sworn servants of the Church, but servants sworn, not to minister as priests to the people or to live as monks, passing their lives in prayer and meditation, but as soldiers whose duty was to honour God in fighting the infidel. They were proud to be ranked as servants of the Church, but they were quite as proud of their exploits in slaying the Moslems with sword and lance.

To their original function of protecting wayfarers on the roads to and from the sacred places, the Templars soon added a further duty. They undertook to battle against the infidel, whether or not pilgrims were threatened, and the brethren became the nucleus of a standing army vowed to a perpetual struggle with Islam. Their numbers, according to William of Tyre, did not exceed nine until after 1127; but every Templar was a knight and a leader, and men who could command were sorely needed in Syria. The Saracens were recovering from the terror into which they had been thrown by the success of the men of the First Crusade, and the Egyptian governor of Ascalon and the Moslem princes of Damascus, Aleppo and elsewhere cast envious eyes on the territory held by the Latins.

The idea of an Order of fighting churchmen in the Holy Land appealed to the imagination and the self-interest of the Christians. The Moslems must never again regain Jerusalem, and it seemed just that the holy places which were the pride of the Church should be protected by the sworn warriors of the Church. Even had their performance been only mediocre, had they been equally ineffective as monks and as soldiers, the Templars would probably have been popular, and Christendom would have supported an organisation which appealed to its sense of fitness. The early members of the Temple were, however, men outstanding as warriors and fervent in religion, and in the twelfth century, everybody had a deep respect for those who lived worthily as the servants of God and who at the same time

lived valiantly in performing feats of arms. Small wonder then that the chronicles are full of praise for the Templars who were both valorous knights and pious monks.

Nobles in the West contributed gladly to the Order in the knowledge that, while giving to the servants of the Church, they were also financing the war against the accursed infidel, and as the result of such voluntary offerings the Templars found themselves entrusted with large sums. They had other sources of income. Applications came from lords who wished to be numbered among the brotherhood, without taking any active part in it, and these recruits were willing to pay heavily for the privilege. It was a common practice for seculars to seek to ally themselves with a religious Order in this way, and any Order which grew renowned could depend upon an appreciable revenue from these enlistments. The greatest of the early associates of the Temple was Fulk, Count of Anjou and later King of Jerusalem. After being at war with the King of England, "he became anxious for the state of his soul, and very desirous of being reconciled to God. In consequence he devoted himself to doing penance for the sins he had committed . . . and went in pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and there joining the Knights Templars remained for some time". This was in 1120, and thereafter Fulk paid a yearly tribute of thirty pounds of silver "to the reverent knights whose whole life is spent in combating for God, both in body and soul, and who, despising all worldly things, are daily prepared for martyrdom; and his laudable example induced several other French lords to imitate his liberality".

The Templars were even more popular in the Latin states of the East than they were in Europe. The Church in Syria gave generously to the knights; the canons of the Holy Sepulchre granted them a training ground close to the Temple; and the Patriarch of Jerusalem allotted several properties to the Order. For at this time the Temple was

subordinate to the Patriarch and its fame reflected glory upon the Church. The secular power in Jerusalem was no less enthusiastic than the Church for the development of the Order. Baldwin du Bourg, who had been Count of Edessa from 1100 and had succeeded his cousin, Baldwin I, as King of Jerusalem in 1118, needed warriors who would serve permanently in the country. From the West came thousands of pilgrims, but many of them were useless as soldiers, and most of the others returned to their own countries when they had achieved their purpose. Of those who settled in the East, some tired of the life in the Holy Land after a few years, or fought only until they had acquired territory for themselves. Then they became disinclined to take part in any further fighting against the Moslems.

The Temple was free from these disabilities. At that time all Templars were bound to remain in the East, and, being vowed to personal poverty, they seemed to have no temptation to win property at the expense of the Crown. Baldwin saw how much had been and could still be accomplished by trained soldiers who were careless of their lives and sought nothing but glory in fighting the infidel, and he was eager that the Temple should expand and provide him with a reliable army. Both Church and State loaded the Temple with favours in the belief that the brethren would prove docile servants. "Yea", says Fuller, "the King and Patriarch of Jerusalem dandled this infant-order so long on their laps till it broke their knees, it grew so heavy at last; and those ungrateful Templars did pluck at the feathers of those wings which hatched and brooded them. From Almsmen they turned Lords."

With gifts flowing in from all quarters and with the growth of its property in Europe and Syria, the Temple, in less than a decade, felt the need for re-organisation. Since their inception, the Templars had, with the approval of the Church in Jerusalem, lived according to the Rule of St. Benedict, but

more authoritative guidance was required for an institution which was developing so rapidly. It may be that, although the Patriarch had shown himself favourable to the knights, there had already been some friction with the prelates in the East, and that it had therefore become desirable that the papal court in Rome should take the Temple under its protection. In 1126, Baldwin II encouraged Hugh de Payens to seek a Rule from the Pope, but such a Rule was not easy to obtain.

The king realised the difficulty, and decided to enlist the aid of Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, the most influential religious leader in Christendom. St. Bernard never occupied the papal chair, but he nominated candidates to the Holy See, and his authority was almost unquestioned. If Bernard of Clairvaux could be induced to interest himself in the application, there was little doubt that the Temple would receive the approbation of the Pope and be given a Rule suitable to its circumstances. Baldwin, who at that time had taken over the regency of Antioch, wrote to St. Bernard:

"Baldwin II, by the grace of Jesus Christ, King of Jerusalem, Prince of Antioch, to the venerable father Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, Greetings and respects. The brothers Templars, whom God has raised up for the defence of our province and to whom He has accorded special protection, desire to receive apostolic approval and also their own Rule of life. For that purpose we have sent Andrew and Gondemar, renowned both by their exploits in battle and by the nobility of their blood, to beg that the Holy Pontiff might give his approbation to their Order and grant them support and assistance against the enemies of the faith, who are all leagued together to supplant and overthrow our kingdom.

Since we know well the weight of your intercession with God and also with His Vicar and with the other princes of Europe, we give into your care this twofold

mission, whose success will be very welcome to us. Let the constitution of the Templars be such as is suitable for men who live in the clash and tumult of war, and yet of a kind which will be acceptable to the Christian princes, of whom they have been the valuable auxiliaries.

So far as in you lies and if God so pleases, strive to bring this thing to a speedy and successful issue."

So important a matter could not be left to the two messengers mentioned in the letter. Hugh de Payens and Godfrey de St. Omer, with four other knights of the Order, also went to Rome to support the appeal to the Pope (Honorius II). The Holy See had not been slow to appreciate the potentialities of the Temple. The Pope believed that the temporal as well as the spiritual power in Jerusalem should be in the hands of the Church, but that ambition seemed difficult of attainment. The position of the Church in Syria would, however, be strengthened by a powerful fighting Order free from all secular control, and the Order, which might be expected to expand if given apostolic approval, would also serve other purposes. The Holy See was alarmed at the licentiousness among the Christians in the East, and the Templars, who had given an example of godliness in what the Pope regarded as a centre of depravity, might reform the morals of the settlers. Honorius may have dreamed of seeing the Temple, or similar organisations, develop to such an extent that Rome would have at its command an army so numerous and widespread that the Church would be able to crush any king or prince, whether in the East or West, who ventured to challenge its authority; but at the present time the proposal merely contemplated that the members of the Order should be stationed in the East and devoted to the service of Jerusalem. Already it had been suggested that the Church made little contribution to the security of the Holy Land, and the creation of a formidable

body of soldier monks would be the best reply to these criticisms.

Honorius therefore assured the Templars of his sympathy, and instructed the brethren to present their petition to the Council of the Church, which was to be held at Troyes in Champagne at the beginning of 1128. The council opened early in January under the presidency of Cardinal Matthew of Albano, the papal legate, and among others who attended were the Archbishops of Rheims and Sens, the Bishops of Chartres, Soissons, Paris, Orleans, Troyes and Beauvais. St. Bernard, however, was not present at the deliberations of the council. He was ill—for most of his life he suffered from fevers and was a semi-invalid—and he sent a characteristic letter in reply to the summons to attend. "Your reason for invading my peace is either on account of matters that are easy or difficult. If easy, my assistance is not necessary. If difficult, I am not in a state to attend to them—at least, I cannot do anything that is impossible to other men."

The Templars made their request before the Council with the explanation that from their foundation they had followed a Rule approved by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, but that, as it was not now adequate for the needs of a growing organisation, they hoped that the Council would lay down a way of life for present and future members. The Council shared the views of the Pope regarding the value and potentialities of the Order, and felt that the protection of the holy places was a sacred trust in which the Church should play a prominent part. It granted the petition and could do no greater honour to the Templars than to entrust the revision and amplification of the existing constitution to the most famous churchman in Christendom, St. Bernard. What part of the Rule was prepared by him is a matter of doubt. He belonged to the Benedictines and the regulations for the government of the Temple are largely based upon the Rule of St. Benedict; but while much of the Rule bears marks of

Bernard's influence, he was apparently only the editor of a draft drawn up by other hands.

The new constitution produced after the Council of Troyes was not to be brought into force until it had been sanctioned by the Pope and by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who, say the authors, "is well acquainted with the affairs of the East and of the circumstances of the poor soldiers of Christ" and ought therefore to be consulted. The Templars were enjoined to follow the practice of the Church in Jerusalem in religious matters, and it was apparently the intention that the Patriarch should have considerable control over the Order. The Patriarch had no hesitation in giving his approval to a Rule which seemed to secure him so much authority in the Temple. Nor did the Pope raise any objection to a constitution which was in most ways traditional. He approved the appointment of Hugh de Payens as the first Master of the Order and granted to the Knights of the Temple the right to wear the white mantle—white representing the purity of life for which they should strive.

After these things had been arranged, Hugh started on a tour through France. It proved to be a triumphal progress, for the people who had heard so much about the great deeds performed by the brethren were anxious to see the Master of the Order. The King of France and a number of his nobles, after learning of the work of the Order from Hugh de Payens, endowed the Temple with lands, and so began the acquisition of those vast properties in Europe which in later years were to be the cause of so many dissensions. In all its history, the Temple preferred to buy land rather than sell it, and in this policy it was following the example set by Hugh de Payens. He put the estates given to the Temple under the control of brethren, who were established in preceptories and charged to remit the excess revenue from the lands to the Temple in Jerusalem. The first preceptory to be founded was at Troyes, and it was on an estate that one of the members

of the Council bestowed on the Order. In time, these houses became far more than offices for the management of territories. There were the recruiting stations for the Order, and the preceptor was authorised to enrol new members, subject to the final approval of the Master. Such recruits were often lodged at the preceptories until their passage to the East could be arranged, and, later still, the recruits were given some military training before being despatched to Syria.

Hugh de Payens also received gifts of money and land from the King of England, whom he met in Normandy, and then crossed the Channel. “ All good men gave him welcome and much treasure, and in Scotland ”, says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, “ and a great sum in gold and silver was given to him to take back to Jerusalem, and with him and after went as great a number as never before since the days of Pope Urban ”. Hugh arranged for houses of the Order to be established in England, but, despite the statement in the Chronicle, few English recruits seem to have accompanied the Master of the Temple to Syria. In France, however, a considerable number of knights showed themselves eager to serve in the Order. The Rule was strict, but there were stricter Rules, and, in any case, men were inclined to measure the piety and importance of an Order by the demands that it made upon its members. The Temple, moreover, offered what no other fraternity could offer at that time. Many Orders promised a heavenly reward through prayer or service to the poor and afflicted, but only the Temple held out the assurance of heaven through fighting, and it was an age in which every man of noble birth was trained for war.

The Temple was fortunate in having so influential a supporter as Bernard of Clairvaux. He was enthusiastic for the ideals of the Order, and, although it would doubtless have flourished without his assistance, it owed much to his advocacy. St. Bernard had no patience with men who tried to tackle tasks for which they were unsuited, and he did not share the

current opinion that any undisciplined soldier, provided that he wore the cross, was fit to fight the Moslems. He criticised the priests who, after spending their lives in sedentary tasks, wanted to go to war against Islam, and he was later to thunder that the Army of the Lord must not be burdened with such but composed of men with strength and skill in battle. "The house of God is triple", wrote an early churchman. "Some pray, some fight, some work." But in St. Bernard's view the soldier should also be the man of God, and his admiration for the Templars, half lay, half religious, mighty in war and fervent in prayer, knew no restraint.

He lent the aid of his pen to the Temple, and it was the most decisive pen in all Christendom. The religious knights were extolled to the skies, while the knights who "remained in the world" were sternly rebuked for their blindness in refusing to devote themselves to godly service. Addressing the secular knights, he says: "You cover your horses with silken coverings; luxurious cloth hanging from your armour sweeps even to the ground; your spurs and your bridles glitter with jewels and arouse the cupidity of your enemies, upon whom, recklessly and without thought, you throw yourselves, and so earn a sure destruction. Are such trappings worthy of gallant warriors? Are they not the vain imaginings of silly women? Will a sharp sword be stopped by golden ornaments, will it hesitate at the sparkling of a jewel, or be turned aside by rich trappings? Has experience not taught you that for success in battle the soldier must have three things—courage, speed and prudence. He must be quick to move, and quick to strike. And do you practise these qualities? No! Those who look upon you are disgusted, for your hair is like that of a woman; you wear garments which are long and voluminous; wide and flowing cloaks shelter your persons, your fragile and dainty persons. You rush into battle, not to achieve a noble purpose, but because

of your savage hatred and your wild lust for glory; or you dash into the fight because you hanker after the wealth and goods of others. When such is your state of mind, there is no security for your soul either in slaying or being slain. . . .

"Let us now consider the soldiers of God, and examine their life in the field and at home, for there we will see the difference between the warriors of Christ and heaven and the soldiers of the devil and hell. They come and go at a sign from their Master. The provision he makes for them is enough, and they ask neither food nor clothing from any other. They live together happily and temperately, and have neither wives nor children among them; and, so that nothing may be lacking for evangelical perfection, they live without property and share the same house, endeavouring to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and it is as if one heart and one soul dwelt in them all. They never sit idle or seek foolishly for news. When they are resting after their warfare against the infidels—and this a thing that rarely happens—they employ their time in repairing their garments and weapons or in doing something which the Master commands or which is for the good of them all—this rather than eat the bread of idleness. There is no respect of persons among them. It is the best man, not the man of noblest birth, who is most highly prized. They try to outdo each other in respect and to bear one another's burdens. They shun games of chess and the gaming tables. They turn away from the chase and from hawking, in which others take so much pleasure. They hate all jugglers and mountebanks, and despise wanton songs and plays as vanities and follies of the world. They have their hair short in accordance with the words of the Apostle, 'It is not seemly in a man to have long hair'. They are never seen dressed up, they wash themselves seldom. Usually they are covered with dust and are brown from the heat of the sun.

"When they go forth in battle they have faith within, and

without they have weapons of iron. They never adorn themselves with gold, for they wish to strike terror to the enemy, not to arouse his desire for spoil. Their pleasure is in horses which are strong and swift, not in those which are handsome and richly caparisoned, for it is fear, not envy, that they seek to inspire. They do not rush madly and impetuously into the fray, but go carefully and prudently, coolly, like true children of Israel. But when the battle has begun, then they throw themselves unhesitatingly on their enemies, on whom they look as mere sheep; they know no fear, even when they are few in number, for they rely upon the succour of the Lord of Sabaoth. Thus it is that one of them has often put a thousand to flight and two of them ten thousand. They are joined in a peculiar union: they are at once meeker than lambs and more terrible than lions, so that one wonders whether they should be called monks or knights. They have the right to both names, for they possess the gentleness of the monk and the courage of the knight. What more need be said, except that this is the Lord's doing and is wondrous in our eyes? Such are the men whom God has chosen from out of the bravest in Israel, so that, watchful and reliable, mighty with the sword and skilled in war, they may keep the Holy Sepulchre".

St. Bernard never lost his interest in the Temple, and almost the last letters he wrote before his death in 1153 were on its behalf. He was the best recruiting agent of the Order, and, spurred on by his words, many knights enrolled in the new brotherhood. St. Bernard emphasised that the Soldiers of Christ were sure to reap their reward. They could fight in the full assurance that, whether they lived or died, Christ had them in His safe keeping, and St. Bernard recommended the brethren to remind themselves of this by repeating in battle, "Living or dead, Lord, we are Thine". He writes to the Templars, "Rejoice if you live and triumph in the Lord; but if you are killed and taken to God, you should

rejoice still more. Life has its uses, victory is glorious, but it is better still to be a dead saint. Those who die *in* the Lord are blessed, but how much more blessed are those who die *for* Him?”

CHAPTER III

THE TEMPLE IN THE EAST

HUGH DE PAYENS returned to Palestine in 1130 at the head of the recruits from the West. He had insisted that candidates for membership of the Temple should be free of debt, declare that they had forgiven their enemies, and otherwise prove themselves worthy of entering a fraternity which emphasised the importance of the religious as well as the military life. Three hundred knights enrolled by the Master accompanied him to the Holy Land, and this force was a valuable accession to the Christian army. On the arrival of the reinforcements plans were discussed by the king and nobles for a new offensive against Islam.

Baldwin II, who was about sixty when he ascended the throne of Jerusalem in 1118, is described as "a religious and godly man, strict in honouring treaties and outstanding in military skill". The Latin kingdom of the East attained almost its greatest extent and prosperity under him, and before the end of his reign the Christian dominion stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Arabian desert and from Ascalon to Beirut. The king was personally unfortunate, for he was the first crusading king to be captured by the Moslems, who kept him prisoner for over a year. During his captivity, the Saracens descended on Jerusalem, but the Franks, under the command of the regent, Count Eustace Garnier, lord of Sidon and Cæsarea, marched out with the true cross at their head and repelled the attack decisively.

Not long after this victory, the Franks captured Tyre, a city which was to remain in their possession after they had

lost nearly every other part of their territories. The conquest was made largely through the assistance of the maritime powers, whose co-operation was eagerly sought by every Christian prince in the East. As early as 1101, Jerusalem had entered into an agreement with Genoa, which had undertaken to "labour zealously in the siege of Ptolemy (Acre), provided that a third of the revenue and port dues which would be levied therein were granted to them in perpetuity, and that they had a church and a street in the town in which their jurisdiction would be complete and absolute"; and seventy Genoese galleys had played an important part in the taking of the port. A somewhat similar agreement had been concluded in 1117 with Marseilles, but Venice, which feared for its flourishing trade with the Moslems, hesitated to ally itself definitely with Jerusalem. The Venetians aided Godfrey de Bouillon on several occasions, but not until 1123, when the Doge Michael came to Syria, were the full resources of the maritime republic put at the disposal of Jerusalem. The conditions imposed by the Venetians were even harsher than those demanded by the other trading cities. The Doge claimed a church and a street, a square, a bathhouse, and a bakery in perpetuity, free of all taxes, not only in the towns that the Venetians helped to conquer but in every town of the kingdom. Venice, however, loyally carried out its part of the bargain to assist Jerusalem to the extent of its power, and contributed a navy of nearly a hundred ships to the siege of Tyre in 1124. "After much toil and bloodshed", says a chronicler, "they forced the citizens, who could no longer endure famine, to surrender in the fifth month of the siege, and yield up the city to our people on the promise of their lives and property being spared."

After the fall of Tyre, there was no considerable battle between the Christians and the Moslems for several years. Internal dissension in Islam prevented the Saracens from

uniting against the invaders, and the Franks lacked an adequate army to make any great expedition possible. Raids on the part of the Turks continued to be frequent, and there were many Christians who believed that it was wrong not to try to slay the infidel on every possible occasion and who insisted on forays into the infidel territories. But such minor military adventures were regarded by the men of the twelfth century as a normal part of life, and almost every country in Christendom was at this period more disturbed than the Holy Land.

The interval of comparative peace was valuable to the Franks. For the first twenty-five years after the establishment of the Latin states in the East, there had been continuous outbreaks of war in some part or other of the country, and domestic affairs urgently required attention in a land disorganised by fighting. The Pope and the Patriarch demanded that the immorality among the settlers should be stamped out, and pointed to the visitation of locusts and a plague of rats from which the country had suffered severely as the first signs of God's displeasure. Two years after Baldwin II ascended the throne, a council was held at Nablus to deliberate upon the state of the Holy Land. In addition to the king, it was attended by the Patriarch (Garimond), most of the bishops, a number of the more important lords, and Hugh de Payens, Master of the Temple. The council produced a remarkable document of twenty-five articles, in which reference is made to the appalling sexual degradation among the people and the general depravity of their lives, and an awful vengeance is foretold unless a reformation speedily takes place.

Most of the crimes against which the council inveighed were rampant in every country in Christendom, but some of them were peculiar to the East. The moral fibre of the Westerners weakened under the hot sun of Palestine, and unnatural vices were not uncommon among them. The

Franks were adopting luxurious and slothful ways; they lived in the midst of a civilisation more advanced than that of Europe, and many of them had chosen to adopt its worst features. Even a petty lord in Syria could acquire wealth such as was beyond the reach of the greatest nobles of Europe, and the splendour and magnificence of the courts of the Christian princes in the East were unsurpassed by the kings of Europe. Dressed in silks trimmed with costly fur, their beards cut in Eastern fashion, the Franks lived like the potentates that they had displaced; the barons had their black slaves, their dancing girls for entertainment, their eunuchs for secretarial work. The chroniclers tell of drunken orgies, of huge sums lost at dice, and of immense expenditure on the favourite sports of hawking and hunting. The drunkenness does not seem to have been exceptional for the twelfth century, but the gambling stakes were far higher than was usual in Europe at that time and the habit more widespread.

The armies of the Palestine princes had ceased to be entirely composed of Europeans. Bodies of light horsemen, usually recruited from the children of marriages between Greeks and Moslems and known as Turcoples, formed part of every force, but not for many years yet did the Franks learn how to use these troops to advantage. The knight was still the backbone of an army, throwing himself furiously into the fight and showing his contempt for the enemy by rashness on the field. His weapons had not changed—he carried a sword and ashwood lance for offence, and for defence had a wooden buckler, covered with leather and often highly ornamented. Armour had undergone some alteration. The men of the First Crusade had worn a tunic of iron rings, but within a generation the knight went into battle in chain mail, a hauberk covering him from chin to knee, and a conical helmet on his head. Over his mail he wore a silk or linen mantle. The men-at-arms had breeches

of leather and their chain mail, if they could afford any, extended only to the waist.

Even greater tolerance was now shown towards the Armenians, Syrians, and Greeks, who had once been despised because they did not acknowledge the Pope in Rome. The city of Jerusalem was for a time reserved for Christians who subscribed to the doctrines of the Roman Church, and an outcry arose when it was suggested that others should be allowed to reside in so sacred a place. Baldwin II, however, not only invited the communicants of the Greek Church to live in the Holy City, but was ready to welcome even the Saracens who wished to reside there. "It was his desire that the sacred city should always have abundance of food, and with great zeal he sought ever to find new means of adding to the population of that city pleasing unto God and of drawing to it more inhabitants."

The Patriarch of Jerusalem and the prelates protested against these tendencies, but they were in a weak position. They denounced the wealth and luxury and the sins of the nobles, but the clergy themselves were among the worst offenders; vice was rife in the priesthood and some of the principal ecclesiastics had harems of Moslem women. The Church of Jerusalem was the richest in the world, and the prelates did not lack money. Not only had the Church a huge income from the thousands of pilgrims who flocked to Palestine every year, but properties in Europe continued to be bequeathed to it by kings and nobles, and the extensive territories in Palestine bestowed by Godfrey de Bouillon and his successors had grown more valuable with the increase of trade in the kingdom. The wealth of the Church is said to have been used even by the Patriarch to maintain a Turkish harem, and the historians of the time paint a picture of a kingdom almost completely demoralised. One of them charges the Templars with "offending the Lord by their sensuality, rapine and various excesses" a few years after the Council of

Troyes, but other chroniclers declare that the brethren were outstanding by the simplicity and purity of their lives.

Hugh de Payens had returned to the Holy Land after that Council in the expectation that the war against Islam would be renewed, but the plans for a campaign which were discussed on his arrival came to nothing. Most of the nobles were too attached to their luxurious mode of life to change it for the hardships of the field, and the Temple was left to make raids into Moslem territory almost unsupported. An army was raised by the king soon after the Master's return, but it was used to fight the Christians of Antioch, not the Moslems. After the withdrawal of Bohemund of the First Crusade, Antioch had been governed until 1112 by Tancred, who was succeeded by his cousin, Roger. On Roger's death seven years later, Baldwin II assumed the regency until 1125, in which year the heir to the throne, Bohemund II, came to the East. The new ruler married Alice, daughter of Baldwin, but fell in battle in 1130. Antioch then reverted to his child Constance, but Alice refused to surrender the territory and was supported in her defiance by Pons, Count of Tripoli. Nor was she content with his aid. Alice appealed to the Moslems to join forces with her against Jerusalem. Her appeal was addressed to Zenghi, Atabeg (or governor) of Mosul and at that time the most renowned of the Turkish leaders. That a Christian woman should ally herself with a Moslem in war against the King in Jerusalem was bad enough, but such an alliance was peculiarly hateful when that king was her father. Baldwin acted energetically and soon defeated Alice. She was forced to retire to Laodicea, which she possessed in her own right, while the infant Constance was given in marriage to Raymond of Poitiers, youngest son of William VII of Aquitaine. It was thought that Raymond would prove capable of defending Antioch, but he turned out to be a reckless leader and a rebellious subject.

Baldwin is stated to have been accompanied on the expedition to Antioch by members of the Hospital—this is the first mention of any participation in military affairs by the fraternity, which hitherto had been exclusively a charitable and nursing Order. From now onwards it appears to have played some part in the military operations of the kirkdom; but not for twenty years did the Hospitallers adopt the same organisation as the Templars. Whether or not the Hospitallers were present at the campaign against Alice of Antioch, the main burden of the struggle was borne by the Templars. Some of the nobles had refused to follow Baldwin, on the ground that they could not leave their own territories, but the Temple had unhesitatingly answered the royal summons. The king showed his gratitude by gifts of land, and the Order also won territory for itself from the Moslems. Its possessions did not increase only in Syria. Within fifteen years after the Council of Troyes, the Temple had lands in Castille, Rochelle, Languedoc, Apulia, Rome, Brittany, England, Germany and Hungary. There were few kings in Europe who failed to make some contribution to the Order. Lothaire, Emperor of Germany, endowed the brethren with land; Raymond Berenger, Count of Barcelona and Provence, himself entered the Order and took up residence in the Templars' preceptory in Barcelona, contributing lavishly to the funds of the fraternity that he had chosen; in 1134 Alphonse, King of Aragon and Navarre, died childless, leaving a third of his kingdom to the Temple, the Hospital, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This tremendous legacy was, however, withheld by his nobles. They were ready to defend the property by force of arms, and neither the Temple nor the Hospital was yet strong enough to embark on such a campaign. A payment appears to have been made to the beneficiaries of the will in settlement of their claims.

Hugh de Payens did not long survive his return to Syria,

and his place as Master was taken in 1136 by Robert le Craon, a knight of Burgundy, who led the Order for ten troubled years. Baldwin II had died four years previously, and been succeeded by a king even more favourably disposed to the Temple—Fulk of Anjou. Fulk had joined the Templars as an associate member in the early years of the Order, and now that he was King of Jerusalem he proved himself a valuable patron. He ascended the throne through his marriage with Baldwin's second daughter Melisande, a woman who was quite as disturbing a personage as her sister, Alice of Antioch. Hugh of Jaffa, reputed to be the most handsome noble in the kingdom, was accused of being her lover, and threatened rebellion when sentence was pronounced against him. Had the threat been fulfilled, it would probably have been fatal to the Holy Land, for Zenghi, who now ruled in Aleppo as well as Mosul and had already inflicted several defeats on the Latins, marched into the kingdom with an army of fifty thousand men. The Temple, who owed much to Fulk, supplied several hundred knights to the royal army but the king could collect only five thousand men to face the Turk. It was the most important battle for thirteen years, and resulted in disaster for the Franks. "Of the pagans, thousands without number fell", says a chronicler; "but by the judgment of God, who is ever just and righteous in his decrees, the whole of the Christians were annihilated, all being cut in pieces except thirty knights and men-at-arms. The king with ten of his own men and eighteen Knights Templars alone escaped from the slaughter and found refuge". The loss in the Christian ranks was not quite so terrible as this account makes out, but no more than a few hundred of the king's followers survived the battle.

In other parts of Syria, there were also serious reverses for the Franks during Fulk's reign. Pons, Count of Tripoli, was captured by the Moslems and put to death in 1137, being

succeeded by his son, Raymond. John Comnenus, the Byzantine Emperor, demanded that his overlordship of Antioch should be acknowledged, and when his demand was rejected he descended upon the principality and began to lay it waste. Jerusalem, which regarded itself as the protector of Antioch, could spare no troops for its defence. Indeed, instead of expelling John Comnenus, Fulk had to appeal to him for assistance against the Moslems, who were advancing upon the Holy City. The Emperor lent his aid, but as soon as the danger had passed, Fulk and John Comnenus quarrelled, and the alliance between the Greeks and Franks, which would have been of the greatest advantage to both, was dissolved.

The worst blow against the Latin security was struck in Edessa, the bulwark against the Turks from Mesopotamia. When Baldwin I ascended the throne of Jerusalem, he gave Edessa to his companion in arms, Joscelin de Courtenay. Joscelin proved a doughty defender of the important charge, but on his death Edessa passed to a feeble successor in his son Joscelin II. He was absent from his capital when, only a few months after he had been installed, the Moslems launched an attack under Zenghi. Fulk had made great mistakes when King of Jerusalem, but he would have recognised the importance of saving Edessa at almost any cost. His reign, however, had been ended by a hunting accident shortly before Zenghi's assault, and Jerusalem lacked a ruler with authority. Fulk's heir was his son, Baldwin, a boy of twelve, and the power was in the hands of the troublesome Melisande. No assistance was sent to the beleaguered Edessa, and it surrendered to Zenghi in December, 1144.

Some time later Joscelin II tried to regain his capital, but, though he succeeded in holding it for a few days, he was soon ejected and ended his life in a Moslem prison. The fall of the capital of Edessa was the first considerable loss of territory sustained by the Christians. What remained of the province

was sold to the Emperor of Constantinople, but he was helpless to defend the territory and the Saracens quickly overran the whole principality. The capture of Edessa is the turning point in the war between the East and the West. From then onwards, the power of the Christians waned steadily; though at times they seemed to recover their strength and small forces of Franks were yet to put great Moslem armies to flight, the decline of the Latin states in the East had set in and the Christians were fighting a losing battle.

The Crusaders had invaded Syria at a time when Islam was disorganised, and their numbers, their ferocity and daring, their superior weapons of offence and defence, and their methods of fighting had won the victory. The courage of the Franks still remained high, but the appetite for war had passed among many of them. Only the Templars and a small proportion of the seculars felt that in fighting the Moslem they were engaged in a holy war under the leadership of Christ. Neither side now had any advantage in weapons, and the Moslems had learned the tactics of the Westerners. The decisive factor was that of numbers. The Christians had been left with only the skeleton of an army at the end of the First Crusade, and from the time of Godfrey de Bouillon had always been vastly outnumbered. The terror inspired by the original Crusaders had been the best protection of the Christians for two generations, but the legend of the invincibility of the warriors of the West was bound to be disproved when, as happened on several occasions, a few hundred knights gave battle to a force twenty times as large. Islam was not yet united—had it been, the Christians would have been swept out of Syria instantly; but dissension had multiplied in the Latin states and in the second quarter of the twelfth century quarrels handicapped the Franks even more than the Moslems.

To the Temple, the fall of Edessa proved of advantage at first, as the success of the infidel aroused enthusiasm anew for

the holy war. In prosperity Europe had become tepid about the fight against the infidel, but the reverse at Edessa made people anxious for the safety of Jerusalem and determined that the Moslems should be stopped. Many of the Latin institutions in the East had been discredited or had grown unpopular for various reasons, but the reputation of the Templars stood higher than ever. They had covered themselves with glory in battle and songs of their great deeds were sung throughout Christendom. When, therefore, nobles who wanted to help the Franks considered the best destination for their contributions, the Temple was an obvious choice.

The disaster in the East brought men as well as money to the Order. Now that the Christian supremacy seemed in danger, knights saw themselves in the rôle of saviours of Jerusalem and were inspired to offer themselves for service. Not only was the renown of the Order great in Europe, but in every country it had preceptories where recruits were accepted for service and provided with lodging until a passage could be arranged to Syria. An historian, writing of the Templars in the middle of the twelfth century says: "They have immense properties, beyond the seas as well as in the East, and in the whole Christian world there is not a single province where they have not some property, so that their riches, according to report are equal to those of kings".

Although recruitment to the Order had increased and the income had gone up considerably, the Temple could not do much in its own strength against the hordes of Moslems, and little help was given by the other Christians in the East. The West must supply an army to crush the menace of Islam, and the Franks appealed to the Holy See and the princes of Christendom. The answer to this call was the Second Crusade, proclaimed as a stern duty by Bernard of Clairvaux. The Pope gave him a special commission to arouse Christendom, and at Easter, 1146, he preached the holy war at

Vézelay before Louis VII of France and his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, both of whom took the cross. Bernard later won the Emperor Conrad of Germany to vow himself to the Crusade, and, though this new expedition was not a madness such as had swept Europe at the close of the eleventh century, the Crusaders are estimated to have numbered between two and three hundred thousand.

Pope Eugenius III came to Paris in 1147 to speed the warriors on their way, and attended a convention in which 130 Templars took part. It was at this time that he gave the Order a special mark of favour. The brethren were authorised by the Pope to wear the red cross on their right shoulder, and so to the white mantle, emblem of purity, the Templars added the red cross, symbol of martyrdom. Drawings of the red cross knights, wearing the white mantle over their mail, and with a red linen coif on their heads, were to become familiar throughout the West and fantastic tales told of the fear which they inspired in the hearts of the Moslems. Their battle-cry, *Beauséant*, was the name of their standard, a banner half black and half white: white "because they are friendly and good to the friends of Christ" and black because they are "black and terrible to His enemies". On it were the words, "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo, da gloriam*". ("Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the Glory.") When the Saracens heard the cry of *Beauséant* or saw the standard of the Order unfurled, the chroniclers relate, they fled in terror for their lives.

The Second Crusade started under happy auspices, but difficulties soon beset the French and German armies. Conrad quarrelled with Manuel Comnenus, the Byzantine Emperor, and pitched battles were fought in Constantinople between the Germans and Greeks before Conrad was induced to lead his men into Asia Minor. Similar disputes broke out on the arrival of the French in the Byzantine capital. Manuel was

suspicious of the Westerners and tried to impose conditions on Louis as the price of Byzantine co-operation in the Crusade. The Westerners believed that the Greeks had betrayed previous armies of Crusaders, and Louis was urged to make no concession but to order an attack upon Constantinople. At length, however, the French were lured from the capital by tales that the Germans had won considerable victories in Asia Minor and had amassed huge stores of booty.

These tales were entirely false. Conrad had been provided with guides by Manuel Comnenus, but the guides, either through treachery or ignorance, led the army astray, and the Germans were faced with famine. Then the guides deserted, and, soon afterwards, the Turks attacked the Crusaders, inflicting such fearful slaughter that only a tenth of the German army is said to have escaped from the field. On learning of this disaster, Louis hastened to join Conrad, but Louis, too, failed to provide his army with adequate supplies of food. So now the French as well as the Germans were in the grip of famine. The two armies united and marched along the coast. Many of the ports were in the possession of Manuel Comnenus, but the Byzantines would give no assistance to the Crusaders, who struggled on, weary and starving, to Ephesus. Here Conrad withdrew, preferring to spend the winter in Constantinople.

The French pressed on to Laodicea and reached that town after defeating a Moslem force which tried to bar their passage. Two days after the Crusaders left Laodicea, the Turks revenged themselves in a battle in which thousands of the French perished. The Moslem victory had been due to carelessness on the part of the Crusaders, and Louis, realising that another such blunder might lead to the annihilation of his army, entrusted the direction of the march to Everard des Barrés. Des Barrés, formerly prior of the Temple in France, had been appointed Master of the Order in 1146 in succession to Robert the Burgundian, and was on the way to take up his

new duties, accompanied by a strong body of Templars. He had already won a reputation as a man "of great religious character and a model of valour to the knights", and the proposal that he should organise the advance was popular. "It was unanimously resolved", says Odo de Deuil, "that all would unite with the brotherhood of the Temple, rich and poor promising on their faith . . . to obey in everything the commands that he gave them." Under his wise leadership, the journey to the Byzantine port of Attalia was completed without further misfortune.

At Attalia, the French nobles rebelled and refused to continue the march. They insisted that they should sail to St. Simeon, the port of Antioch, and Louis was forced to consent. Attalia could not provide sufficient ships to take more than a small part of the French troops, but the Byzantine governor promised to send the remainder of the army to Tarsus by land under safe conduct. The promise was not kept, however, and most of the Crusaders left behind in Attalia perished from disease or starvation or were slaughtered by the Turks. Louis and those who had accompanied him by sea reached St. Simeon in safety and entered Antioch at the beginning of March, 1148. The army of between 100,000 and 150,000 men with which the king had set out from Europe now numbered no more than thirty thousand.

Louis was anxious to press on to Jerusalem, but Raymond, prince of Antioch, had other plans. He wanted to keep the French in his territory and use them to dislodge the Moslems from some towns which had been captured from him. When Louis refused to consider this scheme, Raymond appealed to Eleanor of Aquitaine. Eleanor, the niece of Raymond, was tired of the tedious and dangerous journey and seemed very ready to linger in Antioch, but she could not coax Louis to delay his departure. The French king believed, or affected to believe, that Raymond was Eleanor's lover, and in the end he carried off Eleanor by force to Jerusalem. On reaching

his destination, Louis found that Conrad and the remnant of the German army had already arrived, and a council was held at Acre to decide on a plan of campaign against the Moslems.

There were divided opinions. Louis urged that the first objective should be Edessa; the Crusade had, he said, been recruited with the object of recovering the territory taken from the Christians in 1144, and to divert the army to another purpose would be a betrayal. After Edessa had been captured, he pointed out, an attempt could be made to extend the conquests. Many of the Franks disagreed with that view. They explained that the port of Ascalon, which still remained in the hands of the Egyptian Fatimites, was a perpetual danger, since Egypt used it as a base from which to make raids into Christian territory. Godfrey de Bouillon might have taken it in 1099 had it not been for dissension among his followers; and the subsequent kings of Jerusalem had recognised the importance of its capture. Another section of the Syrian Franks demanded an attack on Damascus. The possession of that rich and powerful city would be a source of strength to the Christians, but it could not be claimed that the Damascenes had been a grave danger to the Latin kingdom. On the contrary, the Moslem princes of Damascus had usually been on very friendly terms with the Christians and had sometimes acted as their allies. The good relations existing between Jerusalem and Damascus had recently been broken, but the blame lay with the Franks, who had treacherously supported the rebellion of a minor Moslem lord against Anar, prince of Damascus.

Louis was overruled. The council decided that an assault should be made on Damascus and that, after it had been taken, the army should march on Ascalon. In July, 1148, the Christians advanced on Damascus. The Temple was represented by several hundred knights and the Hospital had also supplied a body of warriors; most of the great feudatories of the kingdom sent their largest forces; and the

total army, including the French under Louis and the Germans under Conrad, was at least fifty thousand men and perhaps twice as many. Not since the days of the First Crusade had so large a Christian army marched against the Moslems, and the question among the Crusaders was not whether they would capture Damascus, but how long it would be before, having seized that city, they invested Ascalon.

The siege started well for the Christians. They took up their position on the west, on which side the city wall was protected by the river, the famous gardens, and a mud enclosure. Although the Moslems put up a desperate resistance, the Crusaders drove them from the gardens to the other side of the river, and it seemed that the main fortifications must certainly fall and Damascus become the prize of the Franks. The Damascenes themselves held this view, and many of them made preparations for flight from the city. Suddenly, however, the Christians gave up their advantage and moved to the south-west. This move was opposed by Louis and Conrad, but these kings did not know the country and felt bound to be guided by the Syrian Franks. The change was disastrous. In their former position, the Christians had had water and the fruit of the gardens, while in the new position neither water nor food was to be found and there was no protection against the July sun. Dissensions seem to have broken out as soon as the Christians had moved. The lack of food and water became serious and rumours multiplied that a great Moslem army was marching to Damascus and that the Christians would be trapped. The Syrian Franks voted for withdrawal, and Louis and Conrad, though reluctant to discontinue the siege, were forced to agree. The order was given to strike camp, and the Crusaders marched away from the city that had so nearly been within their grasp.

Chroniclers of the time are bitter in their complaints of the conduct of the siege which had begun so well and ended so

miserably. One explanation given is that the Syrian Franks were jealous of the success won in the early stages by Louis and Conrad. So certain were the kings that the city would be taken that they had decided to bestow it on Thierry of Flanders. Several of the chroniclers assert that some of the Franks preferred to lose Damascus rather than let Thierry possess it and that they advocated the move from the west with the deliberate intention of ruining the siege. Other commentators put the blame on the Templars. It is said that the Moslems recognised that the city could not be saved if the Christians maintained their attack on the west, and that they bribed the Templars, whose advice was always received with respect by Louis and Conrad, to betray the Crusading army. Conrad, whom the Templars had entertained lavishly at their palace in Jerusalem, denounced the charge as wholly without foundation, but the tales of treachery were repeated widely. The Hospital and even the young king of Jerusalem are also charged with taking Moslem gold to bring about the withdrawal of the besiegers. Whatever the truth in these accusations, Damascus was lost when the Christian army moved from the west of the city, and it is highly probable that Louis and Conrad were betrayed through greed or jealousy.

After the failure to take Damascus, the project of besieging Ascalon was abandoned. Conrad departed from the Holy Land three months later, and Louis sailed from Acre in the spring of 1149. The French king was deeply disappointed with the result of the expedition and disgusted with the lack of support given him by the Syrian Franks, but he was loud in his praise of the Temple. He wrote to Suger, Abbot of St. Denis and regent of France, that the Templars had been his unfailing support throughout the whole of the campaign and that he could not have "existed even for the smallest space of time in these parts" without their assistance. The French king had arrived in Palestine with an empty treasury, and the

Temple had lent him money, which, Louis tells Suger, " must be repaid to them quickly, so that their Order may not be handicapped, and that I may keep my word ".

The only effect of the Second Crusade had been to heighten the Moslem hopes of sweeping all the Franks from Syria. • Zenghi, the most formidable adversary of the Christians, had died, but his two sons, Saffadin at Mosul and Nouredin at Aleppo, carried on the war against the invaders. Nouredin was to prove an even more dangerous foe than his father, and, soon after the departure of Louis of France, he invaded Antioch and captured several towns in that principality. The Holy City itself was attacked, but any threat to Jerusalem always aroused the Franks to mighty deeds, and, though many times outnumbered, the Christians repulsed the enemy with great slaughter.

Baldwin III, who had ascended the throne in 1144 on the death of his father, Fulk I, is described by William of Tyre as " affable and liberal, a king who abused neither the Church nor his people ". He was a boy of twelve when crowned, and his mother Melisande (like her sister, Alice of Antioch) was not content with the regency. She insisted upon being crowned queen at the same time as he was crowned king, and her intention was to divide the kingdom into two. So long as Baldwin was a child, she had little opposition but when he reached the age of twenty-one, the king demanded the surrender of the whole kingdom. Melisande refused to make any concession, and in 1153 her son determined to eject Melisande by force. Manessah, whom Melisande had appointed as her governor, met the king in battle, but Baldwin defeated him easily and marched on Jerusalem. Melisande was prepared to defend the Holy City against her son, and, though her claims were obviously unfounded, she had the support of many of the lords. The Temple rallied to the king, and when Baldwin appeared at the gates of Jerusalem at the head of a strong army, Melisande's

troops deserted her, and Christendom was spared the spectacle of the King of Jerusalem defied by his mother in the Holy City.

In the same year as he came into the full possession of his heritage, Baldwin achieved a notable victory. The whole kingdom was mobilised for an attack on Ascalon, the Bride of Syria—that port which the Second Crusade had hoped to capture but which still remained in the hands of the Fatimites. Ships from every port were commandeered for the expedition and all pilgrims visiting the Holy Land were compelled to bear arms. Everyone realised the importance of taking Ascalon, and the Temple mustered its largest force for the venture. Letters were despatched to the preceptories of the Temple in the West asking that as many recruits as possible should be sent to take part in the venture, and pointing out that the brotherhood had lost severely in several recent engagements. It had been deserted in 1149 by its Master, Everard des Barrés, who had returned to Paris with Louis, and preferred to resign rather than come back to the Holy Land. Des Barrés had been deep in the confidence of Louis and other princes and had secured many benefits for the Order, and his desertion was a heavy blow. He would gladly have retained the mastership if he had been permitted to reside in Europe, but the rules of the Order required that the Master should live in the Holy Land and no exception to the condition could be made. Everard des Barrés eventually entered Clairvaux, the monastery founded by St. Bernard.

Bernard de Tremelay, the new Master of the Temple, played a leading part in the siege of Ascalon. The port was well protected and ably defended by the Egyptian Fatimites, and numerous attacks were beaten off. As, however, the Franks held all the land approaches and their navy of over eighty ships prevented access from the sea, they were confident that Ascalon would be starved into submission if

it could not be taken by assault. This hope faded when, after a siege of four months, an Egyptian fleet broke through the blockade and introduced supplies of food and strengthened the garrison. Baldwin was besought to give up the siege and he agreed to retire. The Templars opposed withdrawal. They assured the king that Ascalon would yet be taken, and, inspired by their faith, Baldwin countermanded his orders.

The siege dragged on for several more weeks, and then Baldwin again decided that the attackers could do nothing but retreat. The preparations for departure had actually begun when an embassy came from the town and offered to capitulate if the lives of the defenders were spared. This condition was accepted, and the Christians triumphantly entered the city. For over fifty years they had longed to win Ascalon, and, had the defenders lasted another day, Egypt would have retained the port. The capture of Ascalon is the outstanding achievement of the reign of Baldwin III and a bright spot in a succession of defeats.

The Franks would have failed to take Ascalon had Baldwin not listened to the Templars, but before the end of the siege, according to one account, the Order was in deep disgrace. Mining operations were carried out at several points, and, owing to a sudden subsidence, part of the city wall collapsed prematurely, leaving a large breach. "The Christians", says the chronicler, "took to arms and rushed to the place where it seemed that heaven had opened a passage for them to enter the town. But Bernard de Tremelay, Master of the Knights of the Temple, and his brethren were before them. They defended the passage and permitted no one to get through. We are told that they acted thus in order to gain a rich booty for themselves by having the choice of what was in the town. For it is a custom observed as a law among the Christians at that time that in all towns taken by force what a man can seize for

himself belongs to him and his heirs in perpetuity." The Fatimites, who had fled in panic on the assault, regained their courage when they saw how few men had entered the town, and Bernard de Tremelay and forty Templars who accompanied him paid for their greed with their lives. This tale may be true, but a number of chroniclers who were eyewitnesses of the siege praise the conduct of the Templars at Ascalon and make no mention of any such incident.

CHAPTER IV

“THE RULE OF THE POOR KNIGHTHOOD OF THE TEMPLE”

UNTIL 1128, the Temple enrolled knights only. The organisation which grew up in later years, however, consisted of three main classes—knights, chaplains, and sergeants. The regular knights surrendered all their property to the Temple and usually served in the Order until the end of their days, but for many years they appear to have been able to leave at will. At no time was it absolutely forbidden to withdraw from the brotherhood, but it was afterwards laid down that regular knights could resign only for the purpose of entering another Order whose Rule was more severe than that of the Temple. Many knights joined the Temple to serve only for a specified time, and these knights enjoyed most of the privileges of the regular brothers. Temporary serving knights could retain their property, but they had to pay a heavy contribution to the Temple. Married knights were not accepted as full members, but provision was made for them and their wives to live in the houses of the Order. There were also associate members who lived “in the world” and had few privileges. These associates, of whom little is known, were men who would not or could not serve as soldiers but who wished to be connected with the Order and undertake to follow a modified form of the Rule. A chronicler, not very trustworthy, estimates that the associates numbered over thirty thousand at one time. Women are also said to have been connected with the Temple, but no reliable information about women members is available.

By special authority of the Holy See, the Temple came to have its own chaplains. They were expected to serve

permanently, but in fact were not tied to the Order and many withdrew when they had the opportunity of preferment elsewhere or for other reasons. At first a special oath was taken by the chaplains, but later they took the same oath as the knights. The last class—the sergeants—was principally composed of rich bourgeois. Sergeant is the old French word for servant, but the sergeants of the Temple, though naturally inferior to the knights, were men of considerable standing. They often commanded large bodies of men, and certain high positions in the Order were reserved to them. In addition to these categories, the Temple had bodies of native troops, mounted and unmounted, who seem to have regarded it as an honour to fight in the ranks of the brethren. The Order also maintained skilled workers of all kinds as well as servants for menial tasks.

No copy is known of the primitive Rule by which the Temple was governed before the Council of Troyes, but copies are extant in Latin and French of a document of sixty-six chapters which, although some sections have clearly been modified and others added at a later date, is probably largely the Rule as it was given to Hugh de Payens in 1128. This "Rule of the poor knighthood of the Temple" has a prologue of eight paragraphs, addressed to those who are desirous of giving themselves to the service of God and pointing out the great responsibilities involved in so sacred a trust. The circumstances in which the Rule was drawn up are described and some of the prelates present at the Council of Troyes are named in the prologue.

"You who renounce your own wills and those others who, for a time, serve the sovereign king with horses and arms for the salvation of your soul", the first paragraph reads, "must with a pure heart ever strive to hear matins and all the services according to the canonical laws and the usage of the regular canons of the Holy City of Jerusalem. Venerable brethren—you who have for ever surrendered the attractions

of this world and have despised the torments of your body out of your love of God—this must you do, so that, refreshed and satisfied with the heavenly food, instructed and fortified with heavenly teaching, none of you may, after the consummation of the divine mysteries, be afraid of the battle but be eager to win the crown" (of martyrdom).

A warning is given against immoderate standing at divine service, and the brethren are strictly enjoined that prayers are to be said in silence, simply and reverently, lest the devotions of the other brethren be disturbed. Attendance at services is commanded, but the Master has the right to excuse the attendance at matins of those who are weary through their labour for the Order. Soldiers so excused are, however, to say thirteen pater nosters. A brother who is travelling on the business of the Temple or of Christianity in the East and is thus unable to hear divine service must be scrupulous in observing the appointed times for religious services, and "we unanimously lay it down that for matins he must say thirteen pater nosters, for each hour¹ seven, and for vespers nine".

When a regular brother dies—and the Rule reminds the Templars that death is a fate that none may escape—a hundred pater nosters are to be said for him during the following seven days, and "for the space of forty days such meat and wine as would have been given to the brother if he were alive is to be given to a poor man". All other oblations are forbidden. "The brethren can best show their respect", says the Rule, "by echoing the Prophet, 'I will take the cup of salvation, and in my death imitate the death of the Lord.' As Christ gave his life for me so am I ready to lay down my life for my brethren. Here is a suitable oblation, a living sacrifice, and very pleasing unto God." On the death of a brother who is serving only temporarily, the charitable offering is to consist of food to a poor man for

¹ i.e., canonical office.

seven, not forty days, and the number of pater nosters is to be limited to thirty.

No brother is allowed to retain anything at all for his own private use. He must hand over all alms and charitable gifts to the Order, and not presume to expect more than food and clothing for himself, unless the Master "generously and of his own free will do give it". Only two meals a day are required to be served, but the Master may at his discretion allow a third meal at sunset. Meat is not to be permitted more than thrice a week. On other days, the brethren are allowed only vegetables, but two kinds are to be prepared, so that "he who cannot eat of one may eat of the other". On certain holy days, meat is forbidden, but if one of these holy days falls on a Tuesday (a day on which meat is normally allowed), the brethren may "eat meat freely next day". On Sunday, in honour of the Resurrection, all knights and chaplains are permitted two dishes; but as for the other members of the Order, "let them have one and be thankful".

The brethren are to sit two by two and eat their food together in the same hall or refectory. "If it is necessary to ask for anything that cannot be indicated by signs, you are to ask for it very gently and privately. What you require must always be sought in humility and with respect to the table. For, as the Apostle says, 'Eat thy bread in silence'; that is, 'I have deliberated with myself that I may not offend with my tongue; that is, I have guarded my mouth that evil may not pass'." Grace is to be said after meals—in the church, if it is in the vicinity, otherwise in the place where the meal has been eaten. Reading from some sacred book is enjoined during dinner and supper, and strict silence must be observed. Each brother is to have his own equal share of wine, if wine is allowed; but the giving or withholding of wine is at the discretion of the Master. "When it pleases him, you shall have water, and when he

so decides the water may be mixed with wine. But this must not be done to excess but sparingly, for we see that even wise men are stricken down by wine." It is recommended that the brethren should eat two by two, "lest there be shown too much austerity in eating".

The Rule points out, "The reward of the poor is in the kingdom of heaven, and it is therefore doubtless proper that they should be permitted their poverty", but nevertheless the authors of the Rule consider that charity can properly be given to the poor. They are to receive a tenth of the bread, as well as any broken food, but whole loaves which are left over must be carefully preserved for the next meal.

The brethren are to go to bed immediately after compline, and once they have left the hall, they must not speak in public. If, however, it is a matter of dire urgency, a knight and his squire may converse very quietly. Should there arise something of great importance which a brother has not earlier had the opportunity to bring to the notice of the Master, the rule against speaking after compline may be broken, but care is to be exercised in making use of this permission. "For it is written, 'In many words thou shalt not avoid sin'; and in another place, 'Life and death are in the hands of the tongue'. In such conferences, therefore, we strictly prohibit any scurrilous or idle talk, such as would move to laughter; and if, when you go to bed, any one of you has said a foolish thing we exhort him to repeat the Lord's prayer in humility and with purity of devotion."

In several places attention is drawn to the dangers of immoderate abstinence for men who are entrusted with the duty of making war. The Rule recalls the text, "There was divided unto every man according as he had need", and points out that while exceptional treatment is to be avoided, the needs of the weak should be taken into account. The brother who has less need than others should not feel aggrieved because those others, on account of their weakness,

receive special treatment; he should give thanks for his own strength. As for the weaker brethren, they should not be swollen with pride because they are having special treatment, but should feel humbled by their weakness. If weak and strong will follow this advice, says the Rule, "all the members shall be at peace".

The dress of the brethren is specified at considerable length. The regular knights are, if possible, to have white for winter and summer. "Thus those who have turned away from a dark life may be reminded that they are to reconcile themselves to their Creator by a white life. For what is whiteness but perfect chastity? And chastity is both the security of the soul and the well-being of the body. Unless a knight shall follow chastity, he shall neither come to eternal rest nor shall he see God, as the Apostle Paul says, 'Follow after peace with all men, and chastity, without which no man shall see God.'" Parti-coloured garments are forbidden and a warning is given against any display or superfluity. Every member is to dress and undress himself without the assistance of his squire or any other person. The Drapier, the officer who is in charge of the supply of clothing, is enjoined to ensure that suitable garments are issued, "neither too long, nor too short, but, according to every man's size, such as is appropriate". The Drapier is instructed to consider this matter very carefully, "so that neither the eyes of the envious nor the tongue of the scandalous shall have anything on which to feed". If a brother presume to want the best, he shall be punished by being given the worst. Surplices are to be of wool, but in view of "the great heat of eastern parts" a linen surplice may from Easter to the Feast of All Saints be allowed to anyone who will use it; the linen surplice is, however, to be granted "out of pity and not by right". When new garments are issued, the old ones are to be returned to the Drapier, who will decide whether they can be used for the

squires or servants, or whether they are only fit to be passed on to the poor. The red cross was used by all members of the Order after 1145.

Although the white mantle had only been introduced in 1128, reference is made to the trouble that has arisen through the wearing of such mantles by persons not attached to the Order, and this paragraph is apparently a later addition to the Rule. Retainers are commanded to wear black, but if this cannot be procured, they are to have garments of some humble colour such as brown. "To none is it granted to wear white mantles or possess them except the regular knights of Christ." (When the Temple had its own chaplains, after 1163, the higher clergy were also allowed to have the white mantle.) Knights may not wear the skins of animals, with the exception of the skins of lambs or rams. Long hair is condemned; "cleanliness within and without is necessary to those who serve the sovereign Creator, who has said, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy'". The hair was worn short, but the Templars allowed their beards to grow.

A knight is to have only three horses, unless the Master sanctions a larger number, and is to be content with one squire. If the squire serves gratis, the knight is not permitted to strike him or rebuke him for a fault. Knights serving temporarily are also to be supplied at the expense of the Order with suitable horses, weapons, and anything else needful for their duties. If, while serving the Temple, such a knight should lose his horses, half the cost of replacement is to be paid by the Order, the other half being borne by the knight. To prevent argument, a careful record is to be kept in writing of the price paid for all horses.

It is commanded that "knights who have entered the holy calling, for the glory of God or to escape hell, should always yield obedience to the Master. So it is decreed that when anything is ordered to be done by the Master, or by him to whom the Master has given authority, it shall be done at

once, as though it were a command from God, and that there shall be no hesitation in the performing thereof. For it is said, 'In the hearing of the ear he hath obeyed me'". The brethren may not leave their house (in Jerusalem) to enter the city unless with the authority of the Master, but an exception is made in regard to visits at night to the Holy Sepulchre. By day and by night, the knights must go two by two. Unless with the express authority of the Master, no member is allowed to visit the tent of any other member or to speak to any other member after the command to retire has been given. A knight is not to begin or continue a private quarrel, but must "wholly submit himself to the will of the Master, and thus follow the saying of the Lord, 'I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me'".

To exchange horses or armour is prohibited. If a member needs another horse or different armour, because he is handicapped in serving the Order by his equipment or for any other reason, he must report to the Master or the officer in charge, at whose absolute discretion the whole matter will rest and who has the right to give or take away horses or armour or anything else as seems best to him. Gold or silver may not be used on bridles or breastplates or spurs, nor may any decorations be added to shields or spears or lances. Brethren are forbidden to buy gold and silver ornaments, but if such are given to them out of charity, they are to be tarnished before use so that their beauty "may not give the impression of arrogance". Should the ornaments be new, the Master is to consider whether they should not be sold for the benefit of the Order.

No member may have a lockable receptacle of any kind, unless with authority, but this regulation does not apply to the Master and certain other officers. A brother who receives a gift must take it to the Master or the Steward, and if the gift is offered only on condition that a particular

brother has it for his own use, it may not be accepted without permission. A gift to one member may be taken from him by the Master and given to another, and, if so, the brother to whom it was originally presented is not to feel aggrieved. “Yea, let him know assuredly that if he be angry at such a thing, he strives against God.” Even a letter may not be sent or received without authority. If permission is granted to receive a letter, the Master or other officer in charge has the right to require that it be read in his presence.

Boasting of one's failings is strictly condemned. “Since every idle word is known to beget sin, what can be said before the strict judge by those who brag of their own failures? The prophet truly shows that, for the sake of silence, we ought sometimes to refuse to speak even good words, and how much more then, because of the punishment of this sin, should we refuse to take the risk of speaking evil words. Therefore do we forbid and sternly prohibit any brother to talk, either with a brother or any others, of the weaknesses he has shown in the world or in military affairs. Nor shall he speak of the delights of the flesh he has had with wretched women. Should he happen to hear any other relate things of this kind, he should force him to keep silence, or, at least, depart from him as soon as he can and not listen to such conversation.”

The brethren may not engage in sports such as hawking “for it is not consonant with religion to be so addicted to worldly delights”; instead, the brethren should seek to “hear God's precepts, be constant in prayer, and daily confess one's sins with sighs and tears. Let no brother presume to accompany a man who engages in sport, either with a hawk or any other bird”. Nor may the brethren “dare to shoot in the woods with a long-bow or cross-bow, nor to accompany anyone who follows such a practice, unless to guard him from the perfidious infidel”. But “the prohibition does not extend to the roaring lion, because he goeth about seeking

whom he may devour, and his hands are against everyone and everyone's hands are against him ". Apparently fearful that the members of the Order would have their faith weakened by arguments on religion, the brethren are enjoined to report to " faithful judges and such as love the truth " and seek advice from them if questions are put regarding religious matters.

The Temple, with its double function, says the Rule, " that is, the union of war and religion—was begun under divine providence, so that religion might be defended by war and the enemy be struck down without sin ", and the Rule decrees that the Order may have lands and men and demand the usual services due to a seigneur.

Sick brethren are to receive special care, " as though the sick man were Christ himself, remembering the words of the Gospel, ' I was sick, and ye visited me ' ". Those who attend the sick are to give them " whatever is needful for their particular ailments, according to the resources of the house, for example, flesh and fowls and such like ". Old men are also to receive special treatment, and " are not to be kept short of such things as may be necessary for the comfort of their bodies ". (Templars who were incapacitated permanently by wounds or disease or had grown too feeble for war were sometimes accommodated in special preceptories in Europe, and the serving brethren were taught to treat them with great respect.)

Women are not allowed to live in the houses of the Temple " because the ancient enemy has drawn many from the path to Paradise through the company of women ". But if a married brother wishes to join the Order, he and his wife may be received in one of the preceptories. The husband and wife are to grant to the Temple their respective portions of property and whatever they may afterwards acquire. They must seek to live worthily, as though they were members of the fraternity, but they may not wear the white mantle of

the Order. "Should the husband die first, he must leave his portion to the brethren and out of the other part his wife shall have her maintenance and let her depart forthwith. For we regard it as wrong for such a woman to be in one and the same house as the brethren, who have promised chastity to God."

Those who present themselves for admission to the Order are to undergo a probationary period so that their fitness may be judged, and the length of the period is left to the discretion of the Master. The French and Latin versions disagree concerning the attitude of the brethren to excommunicated men. One text permits the Order to recruit members among such outcasts, while another expressly forbids any dealings with those under the ban of the Church. It seems probable that in the early years of the Order recruitment among excommunicated men was encouraged, but that all traffic with outcasts from the Church was prohibited when the fraternity grew popular and could afford to pick and choose its recruits. The suggestion had been made, however, that the ban against excommunicated men is due to a copyist's error.

The government of the Order was to be vested in a council, but in practice the Master had considerable authority. He was not compelled to admit all the brethren to council, but only those whom he knew "to be worthy and profitable to give advice". In important matters, however, such as the granting of lands or a quarrel within the Order, the Rule remarks that it is fitting for all the brethren to be called together.

The Rule admits that "the teaching of the holy fathers permits the admission of children to a religious Order", but the authors of the Rule of the Temple forbid this practice. "Let him who wishes to give his son or kinsman to the military religion bring him up until he has come to an age when he can bear arms manfully to drive the enemies of Christ out of the Holy Land. Then, in accordance with

the Rule, the father or relatives are to set him in the midst of the brethren and declare his petition unto them. For better is it not to vow him in childhood lest afterwards, when he is grown a man, he should miserably fall away."

It is recognised that it may be difficult for members who are travelling to observe the Rule in every detail, but such members are enjoined to do so when possible and to "live irreproachably so that they may earn a good reputation with outsiders. Let them not sully their religious vocation by word or deed, but show to those with whom they are associated an example of wisdom and good words. Let them lodge with a man of best report, and, if possible, let not the house be without a light that night, lest the dark enemy (from whom God defend us) is thus given some opportunity".

As regards discipline, the Rule enjoins that "if any brother shall offend in a minor thing, speaking or fighting or otherwise, let him of his own accord declare his offence to the Master, by way of satisfaction. If there is no punishment laid down for such light faults, a light penance shall be inflicted; but if he should hold his peace and another have to make known his fault, he is to be subject to a greater and more severe punishment. If the offence is a very grave one, let him be removed from the companionship of the brethren, not being permitted to eat with them at the same table, but taking his repast alone. . . . Above all, no brother who tries to exalt himself, growing proud by degrees and defending his fault, should remain unpunished, whether he be powerful or weak, strong or feeble. If such will not mend his ways, a severer discipline is to be applied. If godly admonition and fervent prayers bring no improvement, and he grow greater and greater with pride, then, following the Apostle, let him be cast out of the flock, 'Take away evil from among you'. A dying sheep must be removed from the society of faithful brethren; but the Master, who ought to hold the staff and rod in his hand—the staff to support

the infirmities of the weak and the rod to correct the faults of delinquents with the zeal of rectitude—must strive, with the advice of the Patriarch and with spiritual weapons, to act in such a manner that, as blessed Maximus says, too much lenity does not encourage the sinner nor too great severity harden him in his sin”.

The brethren are to sleep clothed with shirts and breeches at all times, and must never be without light during the night. The Master is to decide what bed and bedclothes are to be allowed, but the authors of the Rule consider that a mattress, a blanket, and a linen sheet are adequate. If a brother has no mattress, he should sleep on a carpet. Disputes of all kinds are to be shunned as the plague, and every brother is to strive “to avoid provoking another to wrath, for the heavenly mercy of God requires the strong as well as the weak to live together in holy brotherhood”. A special warning is given against slander. “Let every one of you carefully guard himself that he do not secretly slander his brother or accuse him, but let him consider the words of the Apostle, ‘Be not thou an accuser or a whisperer among the people’. If, however, he shall know with certainty that his brother has offended, let him be rebuked with peace and affection according to the commandment of the Lord. If he will not listen, he (the erring brother) should be taken to another brother. If he ignores both, let him publicly be reprovved before all in the assembly. For they are indeed blind who cannot refrain from spitefulness, by which the devil subtly ensnares them.”

The last paragraph is a caution against the influence of women. “We believe it dangerous to all religion to look too much on the face of women, and therefore no brother is to presume to kiss widow or virgin, mother or sister, or aunt or any other women. Let the knights of Christ shun feminine kisses, so that with a pure conscience and holy life they may walk for ever in the sight of God.”

CHAPTER V

THE TEMPLARS AND THE HOLY SEE

THE number of Knights Templars in the East in the middle of the twelfth century probably did not exceed five hundred, but, though its numbers were small, the Order was wealthy and its treasure and territory grew year by year. The cost of maintaining the war against the Saracens was high, but the Temple could recoup itself for at least part of the expenditure by the rich rewards which were to be won in battle. While a victory might bring rich spoil, however, it could not add to the number of knights, and the Order was therefore dependent on the West for recruits. After 1153, the year in which the Hospital was organised as a fighting brotherhood, largely on the same basis as the Temple, the two Orders were in competition in Europe for suitable recruits.

There was no falling off in the number of men willing to join the Temple, but the casualties in the Order were tremendous. The belief that it was glorious to find death in facing the Moslems remained strong among the Templars after it had waned among the Franks generally. The brethren were in the front of every fight, almost constantly engaged in making or repelling attacks, and more than half the knights might be slain in a single battle. From their inception it had been the proud rule of the Templars to give no ransom if taken in battle except their sword or belt. Lay knights captured by the infidel could expect to be treated as valuable prisoners who would pay for their release, but as the Moslems knew that no ransom would be forthcoming for Templars, those who wore the red cross were usually put to

death at once. Not until much later did the Order allow the brethren to be ransomed by money payments.

In their struggle against the Moslems, the Templars received little support from the other Christians in Syria. Most of the Franks now in the East were the children or grandchildren of the men of the First Crusade and had been born in Syria. The vigour and energy that had been characteristic of the earlier settlers were lacking in their descendants. The second and third generation of Franks desired to enjoy the luxury that the country afforded and preferred peace to war. They were inclined to look upon the fighting Orders, who existed only to carry on the struggle against the infidel, as disturbing elements in the kingdom.

Men still came from the West to settle in Palestine and showed the courage, enthusiasm and aggressiveness of the original colonisers, but such newcomers were comparatively few. Without a steady influx of the hardier and more powerful Westerners, the race was bound to deteriorate. Those who emigrated from Europe did not long retain their vigour in the enervating climate of Syria, and many of them quickly became demoralised by the unaccustomed luxury which the East provided. The Temple and the Hospital were, however, in a different position. Their members were picked men who had to live under a strict discipline, and whose lives were controlled with the object of fitting them for war. Moreover, because of the awful slaughter in the Orders, the average life of a Templar or Hospitaller was short. The wastage could only be made good by drafting new members from the West, and therefore a considerable proportion of the brethren always consisted of men who had recently come from Europe and whose strength and efficiency were unimpaired by the conditions of life in the East.

The wastage in the Temple was particularly heavy in the years immediately following the capture of Ascalon. Bertrand

de Blanquefort, who had succeeded the imprudent Bernard de Tremelay, was captured shortly after his appointment as Master. In 1156, the Templars marched under King Baldwin III to relieve Banias, which the Moslems had invested. Banias was saved, but on the return journey, de Blanquefort and four hundred Templars, together with most of the royal troops, fell into an ambush. Three hundred of the brethren were killed, and the majority of the other Templars were captured. The Temple had its revenge soon afterwards when thirty of the brethren killed or captured two hundred Moslems; but the slaughter of Moslems did not make up for the shortage in the ranks caused by the loss of nearly four hundred experienced Templars. Months must elapse before new recruits could be obtained from the West to fill the vacancies.

Manuel Comnenus, Emperor of Constantinople, interceded with the Turks for the release of Bertrand de Blanquefort, and the Master was set at liberty after an imprisonment of a few months. De Blanquefort was pessimistic about the situation of the Latin states. A great earthquake had caused havoc in Palestine, and the Franks were panic-stricken by this sign of heaven's anger against them. The earthquake had also done much damage in Moslem territory, and both sides were for a time engaged in rebuilding and had no thought of war. The Moslems, however, recovered quickly from the disaster, and their attacks on Christian territory became more fierce as well as more frequent. De Blanquefort wrote to Louis of France reporting that the Turks were increasing in boldness; they had, he said, sunk their quarrels and were now banded together to expel the Franks from every part of the East, and only by the co-operation of an army from Europe could the kingdom be saved.

Louis and the other kings of the West were deeply concerned at the threat to the Latin possessions, but they could send no army and the Franks were left unsupported. The

war was followed anxiously in Europe, and the courage and devotion of the Temple and Hospital in the struggle against hordes of Moslems were praised throughout Christendom. The Pope (Alexander III) held up the fighting monks as an example to all Christians. Much more important than commendations were the solid advantages which the Pope conferred on the two Orders by the Bull, "Omne datum optimum", of 1162. Alexander III had not reached the papal chair without a bitter contest. The German Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, had supported Octavian as the claimant to the Holy See, and Alexander had been forced to flee from Italy. Every prince in Europe became embroiled in the dispute between Alexander and Octavian, and both candidates appealed for the support of the Temple. At first the Order declared for Octavian, but later, at a council held at Nazareth in 1161, it transferred its allegiance to Alexander. The privileges afterwards accorded to the Temple may to some extent have been in the nature of a reward for supporting Alexander against Octavian, and it is suggested that the Templars dictated the terms of the Bull which the Pope issued in their favour.

The Bull opens with a pæan in praise of the brethren of the Temple. The Templars have not "turned deaf ears to the Gospel, but, casting aside all the pleasures and pomp of the world and avoiding the broad path which leads to destruction, you have in humility chosen the rough path that leads to everlasting life. . . . With charity in your hearts, you fulfil in your actions the word of the Gospel which says, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends'; and, obedient to the voice of the great Shepherd, you do not hesitate to lay down your lives for your brethren and to protect them against the fury of the infidels. Well may you be called holy warriors, for the Lord has chosen you to be the defenders of the catholic church and fighters against the enemies of Christ".

The Temple is declared to be in perpetuity under the safeguard and protection of the Holy See, with all the possessions that the Order has or may have in future. Complete control is given to the Master, and no lay or ecclesiastical authority (with the exception of the Pope) is to venture to interfere in any way with the brethren. Withdrawal from the Order is not prohibited, but any brother who does so must enter into another religious community which is stricter in its discipline than the Temple. The Temple, as the defender of the Church, is to be free from the payment of tithes and, like other religious institutions, may receive tithes from laymen. The bishop is, however, to be consulted before any tithes are taken within his diocese, but this is no hardship to the Templars for "if the bishop refuse, you are empowered, by the authority of the holy apostolic see, to receive and retain them". Later Popes confirmed and added to the privileges of the Order. The Temple is permitted to have its own burial-grounds and its own churches—the latter because it would be improper and highly dangerous to the souls of the religious brethren if, in going to church, they were to be brought in contact with a crowd of secular persons. If a church has been laid under interdict, the Temple is authorised to over-ride the ecclesiastical ban and conduct services once a year (subsequently twice a year). The brethren were to confess to the chaplains of the Order and could confess to any other priest only in exceptional circumstances. The Temple was later excluded from any papal censures unless expressly mentioned.

Such concessions were naturally bitterly resented by the ecclesiastics, for they made the Temple and the Hospital almost entirely independent of all control by the bishops. Both Orders owned vast properties, which, by the authority of the Bull of Alexander III, were now free of tithe, and the permission given to the Orders to maintain their own churches and have their own chaplains meant in effect the

establishment of a separate and autonomous church. The Bull of 1162 was particularly resented in Jerusalem, where the Temple and the Hospital had been in dispute with the Patriarch and the bishops. The two Orders had claimed that, as religious communities, they were not liable to tithe, a proposition contested by the Church of Jerusalem. There had been several struggles over this important question, notably between the Patriarch and the Hospital in 1155, but, though payment had been withheld on numerous occasions, the Church had never given up hope of bringing the military Orders into submission. Now the Pope had decided the matter in favour of the Orders.

Prestige was also involved. The Patriarch had appealed to Rome to discipline the Orders, and it was galling to find that the Temple and Hospital, instead of being rebuked, had been specially honoured and lifted entirely out of his jurisdiction. The quarrel between the Orders and the Church was not confined to words. Opposite the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, says William of Tyre, the brethren of the Hospital erected towers "higher and more gorgeous than those of that church consecrated by the blood of the Lord and Saviour". In the towers powerful bells were installed: "When the Patriarch wished to speak to the people and, in accordance with his custom, mounted to that place where the Saviour of the world was nailed to the cross for the redemption of the world, the brethren . . . at once sounded their bells with so much activity and at such length that the Patriarch lacked the strength to raise his voice sufficiently and therefore, in spite of all his efforts, the people could not hear him". The Templars did not lag behind the Hospital in persecution. Their form of annoyance was to shoot arrows at the door of Church of the Holy Sepulchre and terrorise the worshippers who sought to attend the service. The arrows were collected by the priests and "suspended by a cord before the place of Calvary where the Saviour was crucified". Prayers for

vengeance upon the impious Templars were then said, but, apparently, without having any effect upon the wrongdoers.

Not only did the Church in Syria quarrel with the military Orders, but its representatives quarrelled among themselves. The Patriarch of Antioch had challenged the authority of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and, though the matter had been decided by the Pope in favour of the latter, Antioch often continued to ignore the decrees of Jerusalem. The Syrian Church, however, was united against the Temple and the Hospital, and it condemned the Bull of Alexander III which affected both the finances and authority of the patriarchs and bishops. But the Church of Palestine was powerless against the Holy See. It had shown signs of rebellion against the Pope on more than one occasion. The ecclesiastics in the East claimed that the Christian Church in Jerusalem ought not to be subservient to Rome, and some of them argued that the ruler of Christ's people should be sought in that city where Christ had suffered and died.

With the growing power of the Moslem, however, the Church of Jerusalem was faced with other problems and the rebellion waned. Zenghi's sons, Noureddin and Saffadin, had met with some severe reverses in their struggle against the Latins, but the balance of success was in favour of Islam. After Saffadin's death, Noureddin had seized some of his property, and steadily strengthened his position. In 1153 he took Damascus, which he made his capital, and one by one he overthrew the Turkish emirs who challenged him. Only when he had crushed most of the Moslem opposition did he throw himself against the Franks, and then his plan was to acquire the Latin possessions, not by smashing the Westerners in a decisive battle, but by besieging the weak towns in succession. So well did his campaign succeed that by 1162 he had reduced the possessions of the Latins to Palestine proper.

Baldwin III had hoped to obtain the assistance of the Byzantines against Noureddin, and in 1158 he had married

Theodora, niece of the Byzantine Emperor. The marriage brought him a rich dowry, but the belief that it would lead to a union between the forces of Byzantium and Palestine was disappointed. Baldwin died in 1162 and was succeeded by his younger brother, Amalric. The new king was not content to defend his kingdom: he looked beyond Palestine and mustered his forces for an attack on Egypt. Every Latin king had aspired to win Egypt for himself. Plans of campaign had been carefully drawn up, routes surveyed, and arrangements made for the supply of food to the army, but the weakness of the Latins prevented any effective expedition from being launched. Although Nouredin was raging through Palestine at this time, Amalric did not hesitate to invade Egypt, and he was encouraged in his plans by the Temple and Hospital. In the early stages, the expedition had considerable success. The Fatimites eventually stopped the Latin advance by breaking down the dykes of the Nile, but the invaders returned to Palestine with rich booty and a belief that Egypt was easy prey.

A few months later Amalric again descended on Egypt, but now he came as an ally. Theoretically, Egypt was governed by the Fatimite Caliph of Cairo, but he was only a figurehead and the real power rested in the hands of the vizir. In 1163 two vizirs, Shawar and Dirgham, fought for mastery and Shawar was defeated. Shawar then sought the support of Nouredin, who sent an army under one of his generals, Shirkah, to the assistance of the deposed vizir. This army, with which went Shirkah's nephew, the famous Saladin, triumphed over Dirgham, but a quarrel broke out between Shirkah and Shawar. Shawar appealed to Amalric for aid against Shirkah, and the King of Jerusalem was glad to have an excuse to enter Egypt for the second time.

The Christians opened their campaign by besieging Bilbeys, which was in the possession of Shirkah, but after a few skirmishes, a truce was negotiated. Both Shirkah and Amalric

agreed to withdraw from Egypt, and as the ostensible purpose of the Latin intervention was to expel Shirkah, the second expedition into Egypt may be regarded as a success. It was a success, however, for which the Latins paid heavily. In the absence of the greater part of the Franks, Nouredin led his army against the Christians in Antioch and Tripoli and won several important towns. This experience did not deter Amalric from making a third expedition four years later. Shirkah had again marched into Egypt with an army, and the vizir, Shawar, once more asked the Christians for protection. Neither Amalric nor Shirkah could obtain a decisive victory, and the campaign ended with the withdrawal of the two armies, a result which satisfied the Egyptians, if no one else.

Amalric had excused his first expedition against Egypt on the ground that the Fatimites had not paid a tribute due to Jerusalem since the capture of Ascalon in 1153; the second and third expeditions had been in response to appeals from Shawar. Although the sending of a large part of the Latin forces to Egypt had left the Christian possessions almost defenceless, the king was probably justified in organising the two later expeditions, since the capture of Egypt by Shirkah would have placed the Latin kingdom in a precarious situation. The fourth expedition, however, was inspired by greed, and had no other justification. Fuller remarks, "When a crown is the prize of the game, we must never expect fair play of the gamesters"; and Amalric had shown himself quite unscrupulous on other occasions.

Hugh of Cæsarea and the Templar, Geoffrey Fulcher, had gone on an embassy to the Caliph of Egypt and an agreement had been reached between the Fatimites and the Christians. So highly had the Fatimites valued the Latin support against Shirkah that they had given Amalric over a hundred thousand pounds for his assistance, and they regarded the Christians as dependable allies. The king had no qualms about breaking this treaty, but the Templars

refused to take part in the attack on Egypt. Gilbert d'Assalit, the Master of the Hospital, was, however, strongly in favour of the fourth expedition. He contributed a force of five hundred knights from his Order and borrowed money in the name of the Hospital for the expenses of the war. In October, 1168, Amalric, in return for this assistance, promised to cede Bilbeys and certain other territory to the Hospital if and when captured, and further agreed that all towns in Egypt taken by the Hospitallers when the king was not present should be the property of the Order. The Temple did everything to oppose the venture, perhaps because Amalric had shortly before hanged twelve Templars for surrendering a castle to Nouredin—one of the few instances in which the brethren appear to have acted treacherously. William of Tyre suggests, however, that the opposition of the Templars was due to their jealousy of the Master of the Hospital, who "was said to be the originator and chief of the enterprise".

The Franks captured Bilbeys from the Fatimites and won other successes in Egypt against the vizir Shawar. That vizir had twice begged the aid of Amalric against Nouredin's general, Shirkah, but now he besought Shirkah's aid against Amalric. It was readily given, and when Amalric learned that Shirkah was marching against him with a great army he hastily retreated from Egypt. Shirkah was hailed as a saviour by the Fatimites, but the vizir Shawar and he were old enemies and were soon at loggerheads again. Shawar, who had planned to seize Shirkah, was himself seized and executed, and in January, 1169, Shirkah claimed the vacant vizirship. He died a few months later, and the most powerful position in Egypt passed to his nephew, Saladin, who was to unite Egypt and Syria and humble the Latin kingdom.

The Hospital suffered severely in Egypt and turned against Gilbert d'Assalit, who was accused of misdirecting

the Order. He had to resign his Mastership and flee from the Holy Land. The Temple escaped the disasters of the expedition to Egypt, but it sustained heavy losses in Palestine during the king's absence. Throughout most of Amalric's reign, the Moslems had pressed the Christians; Banias, Harenc, and other important Latin possessions fell to Nouredin; an army of thirteen thousand men, led by the Armenian prince, Toros II, and the Count of Tripoli, had been almost annihilated, and several of the greatest leaders of the kingdom were in Moslem prisons. While Amalric's fourth expedition to Egypt was in progress, Nouredin had increased the vigour of his attacks, and, as most of the royal forces had accompanied the king, the defence of the Holy Land had devolved upon the Templars.

Philip of Naplous, appointed Master of the Temple in 1167 in succession to Bertrand de Blanquefort, reported in letters to Europe how the Templars had been slaughtered by great Moslem armies and he begged earnestly for succour. His appeals were ignored, and, weary of leading an Order which received so little support in its work, he resigned in 1170. His place was taken by the notorious Odo de St. Amand. Almost as soon as the new Master was installed, Saladin marched from Egypt with a large army and laid siege to Gaza, the Christian stronghold which commanded the road to Egypt and which had been entrusted to the care of the Temple in 1149. The defenders numbered less than ten thousand, while Saladin's following is estimated to have been at least forty thousand. So fiercely were the Moslems pressed in a counter-attack, however, that Saladin gave the order to withdraw. Gaza was saved, but at the cost to the Temple of nearly a fifth of the brethren and two thousand of the citizens.

Amalric was also beseeching the West to send succour, but he, like the Temple, could arouse no interest in the state of the Holy Land among the princes of Europe. He had

married Maria, daughter of Manuel Comnenus, and had been promised Byzantine co-operation, but Constantinople gave practically no assistance. The kingdom of Jerusalem had shrunk to little more than a strip of the coast, forty miles broad at most, from Ascalon to Tiberias, and Amalric desperately sought aid everywhere to stop the Moslem advance. In 1172 help was offered from an unexpected quarter, for the Assassins were ready to unite with the Christians. This sect, founded by the Persian, Hassan el Homeiri, late in the preceding century, was feared throughout the East. Its numerical strength was not large, but these fearless fanatics had been very successful in destroying everyone who opposed them and even the mighty Saladin had been forced to make peace with the chief of the organisation.

The Assassins had established themselves in the castle of Alamut in 1090, and three-quarters of a century later were in possession of a number of fortresses in Lebanon. Sinan ibn Suliman, who commanded the order in 1172, proposed that the Assassins should co-operate with the Latins against Islam, and that all his followers should adopt Christianity. In return he asked for one concession. When the son of Raymond II of Tripoli had been slain in church by the Assassins, the Templars had pursued the murderers into the hills and compelled them to pay an annual tribute of two thousand pieces of gold. Sinan insisted that this tribute, which had been due to the Temple for some twenty-five years, should be abolished, and Amalric would have been prepared to grant much greater favours. The king promised to compensate the Temple for the loss of the tribute and assured the Assassin messenger, Boaldel, that the payment could be considered as cancelled.

For some reason, however, the Templars opposed the bargain. Perhaps they doubted whether Amalric, who had a reputation for meanness, would keep his promise to give

compensation for the loss of the tribute, perhaps they feared that the Assassins were planning treachery, or perhaps they did not welcome the accession to the kingdom of an ally who might have the effect of limiting the influence that the Temple wielded in Palestine. Whatever the reason, a band of Templars under a one-eyed knight, Walter de Mesnil, murdered the emissary of the Assassins "to the loss of the country as a whole, because the others, seeing that the Christians could not be trusted, straightway drew back". Amalric demanded that Walter de Mesnil should be surrendered to him for punishment, but Odo de St. Amand, who is alleged to have planned the crime, refused in a letter which William de Tyre describes as "dictated by that spirit of arrogance and pride that was habitual in him". The Templars were subject only to the Holy See, the Master pointed out, and Walter must be reserved for judgment by the Pope. Amalric, however, took Walter by force and imprisoned him at Tyre. The later fate of the criminal is not recorded.

Two years later, Nouredin and Amalric died within a few months of each other, and there was a lull in the struggle between Islam and Christendom. Saladin was to show himself a far more formidable enemy to the Christians than Nouredin, but for the present he was willing to make peace. He had abolished the Fatimite Caliphate in 1171 and seated himself firmly on the throne of Egypt. Emesa and Damascus had been added to his possessions, but he aimed at holding all Nouredin's territories in Syria. His marriage with Nouredin's widow in 1175 strengthened his position, but his claims were disputed by several of the Moslem governors. Amalric had been succeeded on the throne of Jerusalem in July, 1173, by his son, Baldwin IV, a boy of thirteen stricken with leprosy. Raymond III, Count of Tripoli, released from Moslem captivity in 1174, was appointed protector and, realising the weakness of the Latins,

he welcomed the opportunity to negotiate a truce of three years with Saladin.

Raymond had intended the period of peace to be used to prepare for the defence of the Latin states, but the chance was lost. All was confusion in the kingdom. The Temple and the Hospital were jealous of each other and united only in opposition to the Church and contempt for the secular authorities. For the kingdom had survived principally because of the sacrifices of the military Orders, and the Templars and Hospitallers looked upon themselves as the real owners of the territory that their valour had protected. Despondency seems to have spread everywhere among the nobles. The Latin forces were insufficient to guard the kingdom against a powerful Moslem empire such as Saladin was building, and no assistance came from the West. Europe indeed was supplying Islam with arms and other things necessary for the war against the Franks, and though the Pope forbade all such trading, condemning those who engaged in it as "the equals or even the superiors in wickedness" to the Moslems, his words had no effect. The Franks felt themselves betrayed by Christendom. Numerous nobles sold their estates for what they would fetch and fled to Europe. Others accumulated hoards of wealth in readiness for the crash that they foresaw at the termination of the truce and no effective measures were taken for the preservation of Jerusalem.

But when, in 1177, Saladin marched against the kingdom, the Christians regained their courage. Raymond of Tripoli was absent from Palestine, but the leper Baldwin took command of an army that was hastily assembled and which consisted of no more than ten thousand men, of whom only 375 were knights. The piece of the true cross which had been reverently preserved in Jerusalem was carried at the head of the Latin army by the Bishop of Bethlehem. "The Templars and Hospitallers and knights

of the king of Jerusalem", says a chronicler, "went forth to meet the pagans. Making a bold attack upon the pagans they forced them to give way, and O, supreme bounty of the Most High! the Christians, who were not in number more than ten thousand fighting men, gained the victory over five hundred thousand pagans, and that by the aid of the Most High." The number of the Christians is correctly stated in this report, but Saladin had an army of not more than thirty thousand. Even so, however, the victory at Ascalon was a remarkable one. The Moslems fled in panic before the charge of the Latins and Saladin lost nearly a quarter of his followers.

The result of the battle did not restore confidence among the Christians. It was felt that the Moslems with their tremendous reserves would be bound to overthrow the Latins before long, and so the sale of lands and the emigration of nobles and others still continued. Saladin had been chastened by his abject defeat at Ascalon, but in the following year he marched on Jacob's Ford, where the Templars were building a fortress. The importance of this fortress, situated in a strategic position to guard the northern frontier, was recognised by everyone, and Baldwin mustered an army to prevent any interference with the work. A number of desperate skirmishes took place, but the fortress was completed and garrisoned by the Temple. Saladin then tried to destroy the building and a pitched battle took place between the Moslems and the royal forces. This time the victory was with the Moslems. Several of the Christian nobles were killed, the Master of the Hospital died of wounds, and the Master of the Temple was taken prisoner. Having defeated the Christian army, Saladin attacked the fortress which, after a stern resistance, was captured and demolished, all the Templars in it being put to death. Saladin offered to exchange Odo de St. Amand for a Moslem prisoner (Saladin's nephew), but the Master would not break the rule

of the Order forbidding such exchanges, and died in a Damascus prison in 1180.

Under Odo de St. Amand the Temple had grown in power, but he had been a troublesome element in the kingdom. The Bull of Alexander III, which gave so many privileges to the Order, had been interpreted by Odo as making the Temple free of every restraint, and the Order grew unpopular as a result of his pride and aggressiveness. The Hospital likewise adopted the attitude that the power of the military monks was unlimited in ecclesiastical affairs. Both Orders claimed tithes which belonged to other religious institutions; acquired churches which were not intended for the use of their members; installed and removed priests in such churches as seemed good to them. The permission to hold services once a year in churches laid under interdict had been extended by the Orders to a general authority to have services as often as they liked in such places and to bury people in the cemeteries of interdicted churches. Wealthy persons who were excommunicated could afford to despise the ecclesiastical ban, for the Temple and the Hospital would, for a consideration, arrange for the priests of the Orders to administer the sacraments to the outcasts. Nor was it only to the rich that the Orders gave such consolations. Often they welcomed excommunicated men merely to show their contempt for the bishops.

The Church of Palestine protested and sent representatives to Rome to beseech the Pope to intervene. As a result of these complaints, the Holy See addressed a warning to the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital in 1179: —

“Whereas it is our clear duty to plant the sacred religion and to cherish it in every way, our purpose can never be better fulfilled than if we consider that, by the authority of God, we are charged to protect the right and to correct whatever interferes with the spread of the truth. From the complaints of our bishops and colleagues we learn that the

brethren of the Temple and the Hospital, as well as other religious professions, exceed the privileges which have been granted to them by the Holy See and presume to do many things which cause scandal among the people of God and grievous ills to souls. They have taken churches from the hands of laymen; they admit to the sacraments of the Church persons who are excommunicated and under interdict and grant them burial in the churches, and they install and depose priests at their will. Whereas their brethren, when going to seek alms, have the indulgence of opening interdicted churches once every year and performing service therein, we now hear that brethren, coming from one or more of their houses to an interdicted place, have abused the privileges by performing service therein and burying the dead in such churches. Further, they establish fraternities in many places which sap the strength of the episcopal authority, and, in contravention of the decrees of the bishops, they attempt to protect those who are ready to join their fellowship, pleading that their privileges authorise this. We have thought fit to make these statements, not so much because of the actions of the superior authorities as of the abuses practised by some of the lesser members. . . . We do therefore forbid them and all other religious whatsoever to receive churches and tithes from the hands of laymen without the consent of their bishops, apart from what they at present hold contrary to this instruction. They and all other persons are to avoid those who are excommunicated and laid under interdict by name, in accordance with the judgments of the bishops. In such churches as do not belong to them of right, they are to leave to the bishops the installing of priests, who shall be answerable to them for their care of the people and furnish a proper account as to the temporal matters of the church. Moreover, they are not, without consulting the bishop, to remove those who have been installed. If the Templars or Hospitallers come to a church under interdict, they are to be

admitted only once a year to perform service therein, and even then are not permitted to bury there the bodies of those laid under interdict." In 1186 the Holy See again rebuked the Temple for acquiring churches and enjoined the Order to give up all churches which it had possessed for less than ten years.

CHAPTER VI

THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

NINETEEN languages were spoken in the first Crusading army, but as the greatest number of the settlers spoke Norman French that language became the official language of the victors, though other languages lingered for many years. The Franks were great builders and erected many churches throughout Syria, but their most remarkable constructions were the fortresses, inspired by Arabian models and showing a trace of Byzantine influence, which they raised at strategic points. In 1115 Baldwin I built Kerak de Montreal, which controlled the caravan routes between Damascus, the principal market of the East, and Mecca, and his example was followed by later Kings of Jerusalem and the princes and barons, so that ultimately the Latin possessions were girdled by a circle of fortresses. In conjunction with these fortresses, some of which had a garrison of a thousand, a series of watch towers was erected. A garrison of a few men in these towers was sufficient to give warning to the parent fortress of any Moslem activities. Where the towers were within sight of the fortresses, signalling was usually by hand during the day and by beacon during the night, but the Franks also used carrier pigeons to convey information, having learned this method of communication from the Moslems at the end of the eleventh century.

From the middle of the twelfth century, the Temple and the Hospital began to acquire fortresses and towers, sometimes by purchase, sometimes by gift, and practically all of them were in the possession of the military Orders before the

final expulsion of the Latins from the East. Little attempt was made to fortify the towns, whose defences were often allowed to fall into a scandalous state of disrepair. The Franks were so few that they were unable to man a city wall several miles in extent, and they therefore concentrated on strengthening the castle which formed part of nearly every Syrian town. The castle was usually separated from the town by formidable battlements, had access to the country through its own gates, and had an independent supply of water. An enemy might easily capture the rest of a town, but the castle was almost impregnable. Such castles were also a refuge to which the Christians could flee if the populace rose against them, as sometimes happened.

The men of the First Crusade had come from feudal countries, and they founded the Latin states on a feudal basis. While, however, feudalism had grown up in the West and been modified by exceptions and privileges, the system was applied in the East by the Crusaders in its purest form. John of Ibelin introduced a system of feudal legislation into Cyprus with the explanation "that the laws contained in it had been made by "the duke Godfrey and the reis and the lords who built up the said kingdom and amended by them several times". The Assizes were thus described so that they should carry the prestige attaching to whatever originated in the Holy Land, and are not to be taken as the actual code of legislation in force in Palestine during the Crusading era. The eight books are largely the work of John of Ibelin and Philip of Navarre, but, although these books never served as the written constitution of the Latin states, the system described in them is largely founded on the customs followed by the Franks.

When Godfrey de Bouillon became ruler of Jerusalem in 1099, he occupied that position, not by right of conquest, but as a lord chosen by other lords. The land had been won by the combined armies of several great nobles and a host of

unattached pilgrims, and no leader could claim to be entitled to the prize for which all had laboured. The princes of Antioch and Tripoli and the Count of Edessa defied the king in Jerusalem on several occasions, but his position as the leading ruler was generally recognised before the end of the reign of Baldwin I. On the king in the Holy City rested the final responsibility for the defence of the kingdom, and the other princes were in duty bound to accept his direction and to supply their determined quota of knights and sergeants for the wars. The total forces of the Latin states never exceeded twenty-five thousand men and it was exceptional at any time to have an army of more than a few thousand. The Assizes specify the quota of the kingdom of Jerusalem as 577 knights and 5,025 sergeants.

The King of Jerusalem took command of the armies of the princes when they were captive and acted as regent when necessary. His power was, however, strictly limited, and he was in no sense an absolute monarch even within his own principality of Jerusalem. The High Court over which he presided (in his absence, the marshal deputised for him) was at first composed of the greatest feudatories who held their lands directly from him. The court had the right to be consulted in all important legislation and was the real governing body of the country. The crown was not admitted to be hereditary when the kingdom was first established, and new rulers had to be approved by the High Court. Hereditary succession, however, became the practice later. A son succeeded to the throne in preference to a daughter, but, if there were no son, a female was allowed to inherit. She was expected to marry, even though of tender years. The queen could carry the crown to her second husband, and children by such marriages were entitled to succeed. Whether the ruler was elected by the High Court or reigned by right of succession, he had to take an oath that he would not tamper with the liberties of the kingdom, that he would lead the

country in war, protect the interests of the Church and guard the people.

It is, however, misleading to consider the king in the Holy City as spending his time in the administration of the four Latin principalities. He was rarely concerned in the affairs of Antioch, Tripoli, or Edessa, and his work lay almost entirely within the kingdom of Jerusalem. He was the seigneur of Jerusalem, as the princes of Antioch and Tripoli and the count of Edessa were the seigneurs of their own territories. Jerusalem was divided into four great baronies—Jaffa and Ascalon, Kerak and Montreal, Galilee, Ramleh and Ibelin—and twelve lordships. The barons and lords held their lands as feudatories of the seigneur and divided them among lesser feudatories. All feudatories were required to give military service in return for their land, and it was carefully laid down how many knights each property should contribute to the seigneurial army. Knights were required not only to fight in the seigneurial force, but to serve their immediate lord in his own disputes. The knight must come provided with horses and arms; in Europe, he need serve his superior only for forty days every year, but in the Latin states of the East, where the pressure of Islam was almost constant, he could be called upon to serve for a whole year and in certain circumstances could be sent overseas. The requirement of military service did not lapse until a knight was sixty or over.

The knight who held land from one lord and was therefore that lord's vassal could acquire other property by purchase or bequest, and he then became the vassal of two or more lords. Such a knight must give preference to the lord to whom he had first sworn allegiance, even though properties acquired afterwards were much more extensive and important. When the knight swore loyalty as a vassal, his oath was usually taken in such words as, "Sire, I am your man for such and such a fief, and I undertake to guard and protect you from

all men alive or dead". If, however, he was already the vassal of another lord, he could add "except so and so". A man who possessed land was necessarily a vassal; his suzerain was either the king or some lesser lord. A noble might be the vassal of a lord for one fief and suzerain of the same lord in respect of other land, and the feudal system gave rise to many such anomalies. In the Latin states of the East, the danger of the concentration of numerous fiefs in a single hand was recognised, and certain limitations were introduced to prevent this; similarly, a fief could not be sub-divided beyond a certain limit. The feudal system aimed at the provision of a supply of fighting men. For that reason, a knight who lived abroad for more than a year and was consequently unable to serve in the field at the summons of his lord could be deprived of his land and another knight be given the property. The bourgeois could have property in towns, but only a knight could hold a fief. It was, however, much easier for a bourgeois to be raised to knighthood in Palestine than in Europe during the Crusading era.

As with the crown, the male took precedence of the female in the succession to a fief. The suzerain held a fief if the heir were under age, but he must surrender it when the male heir reached the age of fifteen. If there were no direct male heir, a female could succeed, but only if she married according to her lord's will. An heiress was regarded as ripe for marriage when she was twelve, and her suzerain was required to provide her with a husband when she reached that age. If he failed to do so, she had the right to demand that he give her the choice of three men, and, on his refusal, she could marry at will. Marry she must, however, before she could possess her heritage unless she had reached the age of sixty. The Assizes point out that the purpose of marriage is to beget children and the requirement of marriage is therefore waived for elderly women.

The judicial system was much superior to that existing at

the time in any country in Europe. Barons and knights were judged before the High Court. The bourgeois had a court of their own, composed of a representative of the king and a jury of bourgeois and maintaining its own police force. A knight could appear before a bourgeois court, but no bourgeois was allowed to plead before the High Court. Natives were tried before a court consisting of twelve natives under a native bailee (or reis), but the composition of the court was later altered to four natives and two Franks. The traders of Venice, Pisa, Marseilles and Genoa obtained in return for their help the right of jurisdiction over members of their own community in Syria and had a special court for that purpose. In addition, special courts were set up to adjudicate in certain commercial cases.

In none of these courts were pleas prepared for the consideration of the judges, nor was any permanent record made of the evidence offered. The authorities did not institute proceedings unless a definite complaint was made, for it was held in the Middle Ages that a crime was not committed against the State but against an individual. The State did not act as prosecutor; it set up courts only to ensure that justice was done when a complaint was lodged, and if the victim or his relatives brought no charge then the State assumed that there had been no injury. On the ground that a man cannot plead his own cause to the best advantage, the Assizes recommend a plaintiff or defendant to apply for counsel to the court, which, however, had the right to reject the request if the case seemed frivolous or unjust. Minors could not give evidence, nor, except on certain points of fact, could women or ecclesiastics be accepted as witnesses.

Against the decision of the High Court there was no appeal, but while the court of bourgeois was the final tribunal so far as civil cases before it were concerned, any case in which sentence of death was inflicted had to be reported to the king, who could vary the judgment. Before a man was condemned

he must plead guilty to the crime charged against him or his accuser must produce two witnesses who had actually seen the accused commit the crime. The defendant could contest the testimony by submitting other witnesses and, if these witnesses were out of the country, could demand that the case be adjourned for a year. If the accuser did not appear at the end of that time, the case was dismissed; if the accused absented himself or if he failed to produce his witnesses, he was adjudged guilty.

A knight could demand trial by battle in a civil case and in all criminal cases. Where accusations of murder, treason and certain other crimes were made in which a knight was involved, trial by battle was obligatory. God, it was felt, would not allow the innocent to suffer or the traducer to escape punishment. The fight might be on horseback or on foot; and the Assizes laid down in great detail the appropriate mode of fighting in specified crimes and the procedure to be followed before and during the combat. A knight could demand trial by combat against a commoner, but the fight must then always be on foot, since the knight, trained from youth to fight on horseback, would otherwise have too great an advantage. While the Crusaders firmly believed that God would strengthen the arm of the man who had right on his side, the divine providence apparently could not be expected to extend to horses.

Before trial by combat, the accuser swore the guilt of the accused, who in turn swore his innocence of the charge. Infamy was the lot of the vanquished or the coward in a civil case; in a criminal case, the vanquished—whether he survived or not—was hanged, and the same fate awaited him if he cried for mercy. The victor in a fight was regarded as innocent if he were the accused, or justified in his charge if he were the complainant. An accuser or defendant who was sixty years of age or who had lost a limb could choose a champion to fight for him, and a woman was compelled to

appoint a man to fight on her behalf. If that champion was defeated or pleaded for mercy, the principal, if a man, was hanged along with the champion in a criminal case; if the principal in such a case was a woman, she was burned and her champion was hanged. The Assizes lay down the dress of the combatants and the weapons permitted in trial by battle. Each combatant must swear that he carried no charms and would use no sorcery against his opponent. In a murder case, the corpse was to be brought to the place of battle and laid naked on the field during the fight. A knight who felt himself aggrieved by the result of a legal trial could challenge the court to combat, but if he did so then he must fight all the judges one by one.

Over twenty lords in the Latin states had the right of high, middle and low justice, and maintained their own courts modelled on those of the King of Jerusalem. Any right of justice was keenly valued; the fines that were imposed by the judges went to the lord and proved a profitable source of income; or a lord could sell the revenue for a yearly sum. Even more valuable was the right to maintain a mint. Attempts to confine minting to the princes had not succeeded, but the privilege was jealously guarded, and only the greatest barons were permitted to issue their own currency. Usually the coins bore a reproduction of a sacred object or a Christian text, but to facilitate trade coins were at some periods also issued with Arabic inscriptions from the Koran. While only the great feudatories had the right of high justice and still fewer were permitted to mint money, many lords were entitled to impose taxes on caravans, merchandise, and travellers passing through their territory; and a noble who controlled any part of one of the important routes to Damascus or Egypt or Arabia was assured of a heavy yield from such levies.

The Church in Palestine had provided no men to the feudal army in the time of Godfrey de Bouillon, but Baldwin I and

his successors had compelled the Church to contribute a quota of fighting men. The quota was never very large and at the most amounted to slightly over three thousand men, among whom were very few knights. Such a contribution was far below the number that the possessions of the Church warranted, for it was at one time the largest landowner in the Latin states. The ecclesiastics successfully resisted attempts to raise the quota to a standard which corresponded with that imposed on the temporal lords, and the Patriarch of Jerusalem, his four archbishops, and the other great prelates in the kingdom were frequently in dispute over the provision even of three thousand men.

As in Europe, the Church had its own judiciary, for a priest was sacred and could not be judged by a layman without sacrilege. The ecclesiastical courts were always more lenient than the secular courts, and in consequence criminals often claimed to be the servants of the Church and demanded to be transferred to the tribunal of the Church for judgment. The ecclesiastical courts did not confine themselves to cases in which ecclesiastics or alleged ecclesiastics were involved. If a man was charged with blasphemy or with heresy, the Church dealt with him, whether or not he were an ecclesiastic. Similarly, sorcery was the affair of the Church. The Church had forbidden usury, enacting that "manifest usurers shall not be received to communion at the altar nor shall any of them receive Christian burial, or even oblation, if they shall die in this sin"; and all accused usurers came before the ecclesiastical courts, of which at least one was maintained in every bishopric.

Before a man made a will, the Church claimed that he must confess, otherwise his will was void (this was a most convenient arrangement, as the priest who confessed a man about to make a will was usually able to ensure that the Church was not forgotten, and it became almost an obligation to bequeath money or land to the Church). As a sacrament

was concerned in the making of a will, the priests maintained that all actions relating to wills were within the province of the Church tribunals. The Church also pronounced on nullity suits, sending the woman to a convent if a decree of nullity were pronounced. With so large a number of litigious matters reserved to them the ecclesiastical courts are described as the busiest in Palestine.

There was no general system of taxation for the support of the king, but a special tax might be imposed by the authority of the barons in times of crisis. Normally, the ruler in Jerusalem raised his income principally from the same sources as other lords and within his own fief. He received an income from the proceeds of the courts and the profits of the mint in Jerusalem; he had the revenue from the levies imposed on caravans and travellers; his treasury was enriched by the ransoms paid by rich Moslems captured in battle; but the main source of income was from the capitation tax levied on Moslems and Jews and from the sale of monopolies. Dyeing, soap-making, tanning, the slaughter of pigs, brewing, glass-blowing, etc., were monopolies much sought after and sometimes strictly confined to Jews. Nobles did not engage in trade or industry, but the bourgeois were ready to pay heavily for the exclusive right of manufacturing certain articles or conducting certain kinds of business.

Despite the comparatively high taxation, the bourgeois class grew rich in the Latin states. They were forbidden to marry the daughters of knights and were restricted in their choice of dress—each man was expected to dress according to his station and scarlet, for instance, was reserved for nobles—but they were much more respected than in Europe and their social position was better. Many of them married Moslem women (but only after the women had adopted the Christian religion). Some of the merchants were rich enough to build their own private chapels.

Many classes of goods had to pay a tax on entering the

towns, and there was a list of about seventy articles liable to duty at the ports. Judging from the complaint of a twelfth-century traveller, the examination even of personal luggage was very stringent and smugglers were treated with great severity. Each port had its custom house under the control of a speculator, who paid a yearly income for the right to collect the duty. Armour and anything required by the knights for the purpose of war was admitted free of duty, but most other dutiable articles paid a tax of about ten per cent. on the average. The trading cities of Venice, Genoa, Pisa and Marseilles had, however, been excused the payment of such duties, and as much of the merchandise entering Palestine passed through their hands, the immunity of these cities considerably reduced the amount of revenue.

The Assizes clearly indicate how much importance was attached to the knight. A commoner who dared to strike a knight lost his right hand, but a knight charged with striking a commoner had, if found guilty, only to pay a small fine. The same respect for the knight is shown in the treatment of doctors. A doctor was not permitted to practice without an examination of his skill and fitness conducted by a number of doctors presided over by the bishop of the diocese. When a patient died, his relatives could bring a charge of carelessness or incompetence against the doctor, which he could counter by showing that the patient had not followed the instructions given him. If negligence was proved and the patient was a commoner, the doctor need only pay a fine. If, however, the dead man was a knight, the doctor could be hanged.

The legislation was designed to protect a small ruling class of a few thousand knights and to help them in keeping order in a country to which the criminals of Europe flocked in large numbers. The most abandoned criminal was sacred so long as he wore the cross and was engaged in a Crusade, and many such who came in expeditions from the West preferred to settle in Palestine rather than return to their own

countries. Fugitives from justice were secure against punishment for crimes committed in their native lands if they could reach Syria, and year by year came the outcasts and malefactors of every country in Christendom. A chronicler describes the Holy Land in the thirteenth century as the dwelling-place of "criminal and pestilent men, wicked and impious, sacrilegious, thieves and robbers, homicides, parricides, perjurers, adulterers, and traitors, corsairs, that is, pirates—whoremongers, drunkards, minstrels, dice-players, mimes and actors, apostate monks, nuns who are common harlots, and women who have left their husbands to live in brothels, or men who have run away from their true wives and taken others in their stead. Wicked people such as these in the West crossed the Mediterranean Sea, and took refuge in the Holy Land, where, as they only changed their climate and not their character, they defiled it by numerous crimes and shameful deeds, for they neither feared God nor regarded man, but sinned without shame, doing their accustomed villainies all the more boldly the further they were from their acquaintances and kinsmen".

CHAPTER VII

THE FALL OF THE HOLY CITY

SALADIN'S defeat of the Christian army at Jacob's Ford had been followed by further Moslem attacks on the kingdom, but the Sultan was having trouble with his army and in 1180 he consented to a truce with the Christians to last for two years. Baldwin IV convoked a council of the barons and the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital to consider the steps to be taken to defend the kingdom, and it was decided to impose a tax of two per cent. on all revenues and movable property, a tax from which even the Church was not exempt. The money was scrupulously gathered by collectors specially appointed for the purpose, but little was done to organise an army to meet the Moslem menace. As soon as the treaty expired, Saladin attacked and Baldwin could assemble no more than seven hundred knights to withstand him. This small force, however, routed the Moslem army and the kingdom was again saved. Several Turkish emirs now broke out in rebellion against Saladin, and the Christians took the opportunity to negotiate another truce—this time for a period of five years. The danger to Jerusalem had once more been averted, but the Franks appreciated that their position was growing weaker year by year and that, unless assistance was given by Europe, ultimate defeat was inevitable.

William of Tyre had recently returned from a visit to the West, to which he had gone with two missions: to beg the princes of the West to organise a new Crusade and to find a husband for Sibella, elder sister of the leper king and heiress to the throne of Jerusalem. William brought back with him

Thibault, Count of Blois, as suitor to Sibella, but Thibault spent only a few riotous months in the Holy City and then returned to Europe. Sibella was unfortunate: when she did marry, her choice was William of Montferrat, who died three months afterwards, leaving her to bear his child; and her second husband, Guy of Lusignan, was destined to lose the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The second mission of William of Tyre had been an abject failure, for the princes would give no succour to Jerusalem. The Holy See alone seemed to have retained any interest in the fate of the Holy City, and, despairing of obtaining aid from the rulers in the West, the Pope had written in 1177 to seek the aid of Prester John, the legendary King of India, in saving the Latin states. When no response came to that appeal, the Pope renewed his efforts to bully and cajole Christendom to take up arms against Islam, but the authority of the Church had waned, three wars were in progress in Europe, and the pleas of Jerusalem were ignored.

William of Tyre's report regarding the apathy of the Western princes added to the panic in Jerusalem, but the Franks were determined to make yet another attempt to awaken Christendom to the dire necessity for sending an army to the Holy Land. Baldwin presided over a council in 1184 which chose the most influential embassy that had ever gone from Palestine, consisting of the Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital. The hope of Jerusalem was in Henry II of England, and the embassy was instructed to use every means to secure his support before all other princes. After the murder of Thomas à Becket, Henry had "sworn that he would assume the cross for a period of three years . . . and would in the following summer go in person to Jerusalem, unless he had permission from Alexander, the Supreme Pontiff, to remain at home. He also promised that in the meantime he would give to the Temple as much money as, in the opinion of the brethren,

would suffice for the maintenance of two hundred knights for the defence of Jerusalem for a year". Henry had contributed the money, but he found excuses for staying in his own kingdom.

The three emissaries of the Franks went first to the Pope, who gave them a letter addressed to Henry. "As your predecessors have been especially distinguished above all the other princes of the earth for the glory of their arms and the nobility of their spirit", wrote the Pope, "the faithful have been taught to see in them their defenders in times of danger, and so we appeal to you, the heir not only of your father's throne but of his virtues. . . . Saladin, the most inhuman persecutor . . . has now risen to such a pitch in his anger and is putting forth his strength to such a degree for the destruction of the faithful that, unless the onslaught is checked as though by barriers placed in his way, he may confidently hope that the land . . . will be polluted by the contact of his most abominable superstitions."

Arnold de Torroges, the successor to Odo de St. Amand as Master of the Temple, died at Verona, but the Patriarch and the Master of the Hospital continued their journey to England and were received by Henry at Reading. The king and the court were moved to tears by the Patriarch's description of the perils of the Franks, and Henry declared that he was very willing to keep his promise to fight the Moslems, provided that his council concurred. In April, 1185, the council, held at Clerkenwell, protested that Henry should not leave his kingdom to adventure in the East, but it recommended that money should be raised for the defence of Jerusalem. This did not satisfy the Patriarch. He complained bitterly, "We seek a man, not money. Wellnigh every Christian region sendeth us money, but no land sendeth to us a prince. Therefore we ask a prince that needeth money, not money that needeth a prince". Henry was not to be moved by any appeals, and the Patriarch and the Master

of the Hospital returned to Palestine without obtaining the leadership of any of the Christian princes.

They came back to a kingdom which was beset with quarrels. The leper Baldwin had resigned the direction of the country in 1183 owing to his infirmity, and Sibella's husband, Guy of Lusignan, had taken control. Guy was unpopular with the nobles and the Patriarch, and they insisted that, as Baldwin IV had withdrawn, a new king must be appointed. For a short time, the child of Sibella and William of Montferrat reigned as Baldwin V, and Guy claimed the regency. The nobles, however, preferred to select Raymond, Count of Tripoli, and, lest he should abuse his authority, they entrusted the fortresses of the kingdom to the care of the Temple and the Hospital.

The Master of the Temple at this time was Gerard de Ridefort, who had been appointed in succession to Arnold de Torroges in 1184. De Ridefort had come to the East in search of fortune as a young man and had taken service in Tripoli. He asked the hand of a ward of Count Raymond, but Raymond refused the request, and de Ridefort therefore entered the Temple. He nursed feelings of vengeance against Raymond, and when raised to the Mastership of the Temple he saw his chance to use the power of the Order to injure the count. On the death of Baldwin V, Raymond would probably have been made governor of Jerusalem, had it not been for de Ridefort's opposition. The Master pressed the claims to the throne of Sibella, mother of the late king, and won round the Patriarch and a number of the lords to the support of his nominee. With elaborate precautions to prevent interference, he had Sibella crowned as Queen of Jerusalem. She chose her husband, Guy of Lusignan, to share the throne, and Raymond of Tripoli retired from the kingdom in disgust.

While the Franks were engaged in such disputes, Saladin was carefully preparing for another campaign against them.

A further truce might, however, have been negotiated had it not been for the treachery of Reginald de Chatillon. By his first marriage he had become Count of Antioch, and on the death of his wife had married the widow of Humphrey de Toron. By bringing as her dowry the great fortresses of Kerak and Montreal, she made Reginald perhaps the most powerful noble in the kingdom. He was certainly one of the most embittered, for he had been captured by the Moslems in 1160 and held captive at Aleppo for seventeen years.

Reginald de Chatillon lived only for revenge. Treaties which interfered with his plans to kill and plunder the Moslems he ignored. He swept down on caravans on their way to and from Mecca; in 1182 he seized Akabah (Ailah), a centre for pilgrims on the way to the holy city of the Moslems; and he attempted to penetrate to Medina, the burial place of Mahomet. Saladin had sworn to humble this persistent breaker of treaties, but though the Moslem army besieged Kerak five times, Reginald beat off the attacks on his stronghold. Since Kerak seemed to be impregnable, Saladin determined to strike at some other part of the kingdom, and at the beginning of 1187 he sent an advance guard of seven thousand men across the frontier. This force, under Saladin's son, Malek el Afdal, raided the country as far as Nazareth without opposition, but on returning the Moslems were met on May 1st by a detachment of Christians. It had been hurriedly collected by the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital, and consisted only of six hundred men, of whom a quarter were knights. Only Gerard de Ridefort and three Templars escaped from the massacre of the Christians.

The main body of Moslems marched under Saladin to join Malek el Afdal at Galilee. The combined army, eighty thousand strong, made for Tiberias and captured that port, with the exception of the castle. Guy of Lusignan called

the country to arms, and a great Christian army gathered at the well of Sepphoris, near Nazareth. Every part of the Latin states united in this crisis. From Antioch came fifty knights; Raymond of Tripoli, sinking his differences with the king, led over a hundred knights to the royal army; the fortresses of the Temple and the Hospital reduced their garrisons to a minimum to release men. The army consisted of over twelve hundred knights, eight thousand foot soldiers, and about fifteen thousand Turcoples—the largest force which the Latin states had ever put in the field. Money was not lacking. Henry II of England, hoping to visit the Holy Land, had sent treasure to the Temple to be retained until his arrival, and Gerard de Ridefort surrendered this money to meet the expenses of the expedition.

On July 1st the council was called to deliberate upon the position. Either the Franks could go to the release of the castle of Tiberias or they could await an attack by Saladin. Raymond of Tripoli emphasised the rashness of marching across the waterless plain to Tiberias, and it was agreed that the Franks should let Saladin take the offensive. Gerard de Ridefort, however, was determined that Raymond's advice should not be followed; and after the council the Master went to the king. Bernard the Treasurer reports that Gerard pleaded with Guy: "Sire, do you believe the advice of that traitor? He wishes to shame you. You have only recently been made king, and no king of this country has ever had so large an army within so short a time. If you allow a city only five miles away to be lost, you will be disgraced. The Templars will throw off their white mantles and sell all that they have rather than not take their revenge upon the Saracens. Sire, let the order be given for every man to take up his post and, with the sacred cross carried at our head, let us advance'". Guy allowed himself to be persuaded. Next morning, the wood of the true cross was carried at the head of the army by the Bishops of Acre and Lydda, the

military Orders took up their positions beside it—the Templars on the right and the Hospitallers on the left—and the Franks marched towards Hittin, where the Moslems had encamped.

Progress was made difficult by the heat of the sun, and Guy reached the fatal decision to camp for the night on the waterless plain to allow the weary troops to recuperate. Next day the Latins came in sight of the Moslem army and the battle was joined. "At their entreaty (the king) gave the honour of striking the first blow to the Master and Knights of the Temple. Upon this, the brethren of the Temple, rushing upon the foe with the bravery of lions, put some to the sword and forced others to take to flight. The rest (of the Christians), however, neglecting the king's command, did not join the battle or give them any succour whatever; in consequence of which the knights of the Temple were hemmed in and slaughtered." The lay knights and the members of the two military Orders fought desperately, but the auxiliaries, maddened with thirst, could think only of pressing forward to the water which lay behind the Moslem army, and they broke their ranks early in the conflict. The king and one hundred and fifty knights gathered round the true cross, but all were soon killed or compelled to surrender. Guy of Lusignan, Reginald of Chatillon, the Masters of the Temple and the Hospital, and many of the other notable leaders became the captives of the Moslems. As for the true cross, that the Christians "might know by a certain sign and manifest proof that the Lord was terribly wroth with them and might not doubt that the shield of His divine protection had been withdrawn from them, they had the lamentable misfortune on that black day to lose the beams of the cross of our salvation". Another chronicler explains that "this was done through the righteous judgment of God"; for the Bishop of Acre was equipped with armour, whereas the bearer of the relic should go unprotected.

"Having greater faith in worldly arms than in heavenly ones", the chronicler remarks, "he went forth to battle in a coat of mail, and shortly after perished, being pierced by an arrow."

The Masters of the Temple and the Hospital were spared in the hope of obtaining ransom from them, but all the other members of these Orders were put to death. An Arab chronicler says that the Templars and Hospitallers were killed because they were more energetic in battle than the other Franks, but another explanation is that the sentence was passed because the Temple had supported Reginald de Chatillon in his raids on Moslem caravans and the Hospital had also broken treaties. Reginald was executed almost at once. Guy and most of the other captured lords were, however, given their lives. With nearly every great leader killed or captured, the Franks were defenceless against the Moslems, who raged through the Holy Land.

Among the Templars, the loss at Hittin is said to have been two hundred and thirty knights and at least another hundred had fallen in engagements immediately before that battle. Such a toll represented more than half the total strength of the Order in the East, and succour had to be obtained from Europe. The Preceptor of Jerusalem, Terricus, who assumed the direction of the Temple during the captivity of Gerard de Ridefort, reported the disaster at Hittin to the preceptories of the West. "Brother Terricus and the brotherhood—that brotherhood, alas! all but annihilated—to all preceptors and brethren of the Temple to whom these presents shall come, Greeting", he writes. "Neither by our words nor our tears can we hope to make you understand the many and great calamities with which, because of our sins, the anger of God has permitted us to be visited. The infidels assembled an immense multitude of their people and fiercely invaded the Christian territories. Uniting the forces of our country, we accordingly

attacked them, directing our march towards Tiberias, which had been taken by storm. After repulsing us among some dangerous rocks, they attacked us with such fierceness that they captured the holy cross and our king. A multitude was slain and two hundred and thirty of our brethren, as we believe, taken and beheaded. . . . After this the pagans, drunk with the blood of the Christians, went tempestuously with their hosts to the city of Acre; and, taking it by storm, spread themselves throughout nearly all the land, only Jerusalem, Tyre, Ascalon, and Beirut now being left to us and Christendom. These cities, too—since almost all the citizens have been slain—we shall be unable to hold unless we speedily receive divine assistance and are given your aid. At the present time they (the Moslems) are besieging Tyre and cease not to assault it either by day or night. So vast are their numbers that, like swarms of ants, they have covered the whole face of the land from Tyre as far as Jerusalem and Gaza. We beg you, therefore, at once to grant succour to us and to Christianity, which is all but ruined in the East, so that by the aid of God and with the support of your arms, we may save the rest of these cities."

Jerusalem fell to the Moslems on October 3rd, 1187, after a seige of two weeks, but the Christians were allowed to leave the city unharmed on payment of a fixed ransom. The Temple exhausted its treasury to pay the ransom of the poor inhabitants and guarded them on their journey from the Holy City to Tripoli. Terricus reported the loss of Jerusalem to Henry of England. "Jerusalem, alas! has fallen. Saladin ordered the cross to be cast down from the summit of the Temple of the Lord, and for two days carried about the city and beaten with sticks. After this he ordered the Temple of the Lord to be washed with rose water, inside and out and from top to bottom." The capture of the Holy City struck panic into the Christians, and within two years the Latin possessions in the East were reduced to little more

than Tyre, Antioch and Tripoli. The defence of Tyre was one of the few bright spots. Saladin had expected to take the port easily, but Conrad of Montferrat, who had come from Constantinople shortly before, beat off the Moslems with heavy loss. "Saladin was so overwhelmed with grief", Terricus declares, "that he cut off the ears and tail of his horse and rode it thus through the army in the sight of all" after his reverse at Tyre. Terricus was relieved of his responsibility as deputy Master at the beginning of 1188 when Gerard de Ridefort was set at liberty.

King Guy was released at the same time and went to Tyre, the one great port which had been saved from the Moslems. As Conrad of Montferrat had protected Tyre against Saladin's attack, he felt entitled to hold the city and he refused to surrender it to Guy. He offered, however, to support the king in an assault on Acre and Guy was eager to march against the Moslems in that city. As it proved impossible to assemble a sufficient army for the venture among the Franks, the venture was postponed until the West sent support.

Since the Second Crusade, nearly half a century previously, Europe had been receiving urgent appeals from the Holy Land; and in the ten years preceding the fall of Jerusalem, two embassies had been sent to impress the princes of Christendom with the necessity for aid if the Holy City were to be saved. Frequent as such warnings had been, however, the fall of Jerusalem came as a shock. The Franks had declared again and again that the Holy City was in imminent danger, but something had always arisen to save it, and Europe had come to believe that the reports from the East were grossly exaggerated. Besides, it was felt that Jerusalem had God's special protection, and that He would not permit it to be given into the hands of the infidel.

When the tidings of the capture of Jerusalem reached Europe, the Franks were accused of having brought this

judgment upon themselves by their immorality, and tales were repeated of the enormities committed by the Christians in the Holy Land. But whatever the reason for the calamity, Christendom insisted that the Holy City should be won back from Saladin, however great the difficulty. The Pope imposed a penance on all Christians and ordered services to be conducted daily in every church in Christendom. "On learning of the severe and tremendous judgment inflicted upon the land of Jerusalem by the hand of God", the Pope wrote to the princes, "both we and our brethren were so overwhelmed with terror and overcome with sorrow that we did not know what we could do, or even what we should try to do. To our minds came only the word of the Psalmist when he laments and says, 'O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance: the holy temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem in heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth'. Taking advantage of the quarrels which had arisen throughout the earth, by the wickedness of men and the machinations of the devil, Saladin came with a host of soldiers, and, being met by the king, the bishops, the Templars, the Hospitallers, earls and barons, with the people of the land, together with the cross of our Lord . . . many of our people were then slain, the cross of our Lord captured, the bishops slaughtered, the king made prisoner, and nearly all slain with the sword or taken by the enemy, so that it is said very few survived. Though we now say with the Prophet, 'O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep night and day for the slain of my people', yet we ought not to be so utterly cast down as to lose all hope. We ought not to think that God is so angered with His people that what He, in His wrath, had allowed to be done on account of our sins, He will not, when appeased by our repentance, alleviate in His compassion; nor must we doubt that after

our tears and lamentations He will cause gladness and rejoicing”.

The Holy See emphasises again and again that the disasters are due to the sins of the people, not only in the East, but throughout Christendom, and that atonement on the part of everyone is necessary to bring about the forgiveness of heaven. “We must turn to the Lord our God, and first correct in ourselves those things in which we have done wrong, and then stand prepared for the fierceness and malice of our foes.” In another letter the Pope writes, “Inasmuch as we do not doubt that the disasters in the land of Jerusalem, lately occurring through the invasion of the Saracens, have been caused by the sins of the inhabitants of that land and all the people of Christendom, we, by the common consent of our brethren and with the approval of many of the bishops, have enacted that for the next five years all persons shall fast on the sixth day of the week. . . . Moreover, on the fourth day of the week all persons who are in good health are to abstain from eating flesh. We and our brethren do also forbid to ourselves and our households the use of flesh on the second day of the week, unless prevented by illness or some great calamity or other evident cause”.

William of Tyre came to Europe in the year after the loss of Jerusalem and besought the princes of the West to sink their differences and unite their strength against Islam. He preached at Gisors before Henry of England and Philip Augustus of France, who were then at war, and the kings patched up a truce so that they could prepare for a Crusade. In England and France, a special tax of ten per cent. was imposed on all goods with the exception of tools, jewels, and the weapons of knights. This tax—the Saladin Tithe, as it is called—was to be collected in the presence of a Templar, a Hospitaller, and representatives of the king and the Church, and Henry and Philip bound themselves not to use

the money for any purpose other than the relief of the Holy Land. In Germany, Frederick Barbarossa levied a similar tax for the Crusade which he was organising.

The Templars and Hospitallers in Europe did not, however, wait for the kings to assemble armies before sending assistance to their brethren in the East. From the houses of both Orders, men were at once despatched to the Holy Land, and many secular knights and commoners chose to accompany these detachments of the military institutions rather than remain until the royal armies were ready to set out. By the summer of 1189, several thousand recruits from the West had gathered at Tyre and put themselves under the command of King Guy. He decided to make his assault on Acre with this force and the remnant of the army of the Franks, and in the first few days he almost succeeded in winning the city. Owing to the Christians' lack of siege engines, however, the Moslems were able to repulse the attacks on the port, and the Franks settled down to a siege which lasted for two years and proved one of the most remarkable in all history. At one time three hundred thousand soldiers were gathered outside the walls and a third of that number died in battle or from wounds, disease, or famine.

Saladin recognised the importance of holding Acre and hastened to the relief of the port with a large army. In October the two forces met. The infidels broke before the charge of the Westerners, who, forgetting all caution in their eagerness for plunder, pressed on to the Moslem camp. Saladin rallied his men and made a counter-attack on the Christian camp, which was defended only by a few hundred Templars. Gerard de Ridefort and his followers held the infidels in check for an hour, by which time the impetuous Latins had realised the danger and come to the support of the defenders. By then, however, Gerard and half the Templars had been killed.

Shortly afterwards Saladin withdrew and hostilities ceased

during the winter; but the Moslems returned in the spring of 1190 and the battle was again joined. The Christians now had the aid of a German army. In the spring of the previous year, Frederick Barbarossa had set out from Ratisbon with a hundred thousand men, but he himself was drowned in the River Salep, part of his followers were lost in battles against the Byzantines and Turks, a large number deserted on the death of their Emperor, and only some twenty thousand men reached Acre under Barbarossa's son, Frederick. (A nursing Order was developed among the Germans at the siege of Acre and became a military body. From 1197 the Teutonic Knights, with white mantle and black cross, took their place with the Temple and Hospital as a fighting organisation.) In addition to the Germans, Guy had the support of ten thousand men under Hugh of Champagne; Duke Leopold of Austria had come with a small army; and contingents arrived during the summer from England, Denmark, Italy, Flanders and Spain.

Neither Guy nor Saladin was anxious for a decisive battle. Saladin hoped for reinforcements, while Guy pinned his faith to the armies which were on the way from Europe. Many minor engagements were fought, and both the Christians and Moslems suffered heavily. The losses among the Temple and the Hospital were especially severe. Most of their members were newcomers to the East, and these recruits were eager to show their valour and prove themselves worthy successors of the brethren who had so long preserved the Holy Land for Christendom against tremendous odds.

The approach of winter once more brought a postponement of operations, but in April, 1191, the first of the armies of the West reached Acre. Henry II of England never fulfilled his oath to lead a Crusade, but his son, Richard I, was more reliable in this at least. Cœur de Lion had enrolled himself among the Crusaders in 1187, but not until June, 1190, by which time he had ascended the throne, did he and Philip

Augustus meet at Vézelay to begin the holy war. The two armies, each fifty thousand strong, wintered in Sicily. The throne of that island was occupied by the usurper, Tancred, who had kept Richard's sister, Joanna, in captivity. Richard demanded her release and a money payment as compensation, and while negotiations were proceeding a quarrel broke out between some English soldiers and a trader in Messina. Both the English and Sicilians took to arms, and Richard, perhaps glad of an excuse for an attack, led his army against Messina, which he captured easily. Philip Augustus then intervened. He and Richard were old foes, and each was jealous of the other. They had agreed that any conquests made during the Crusade should be shared equally and Philip now claimed half of Messina, a claim which Richard rejected. Ultimately Richard was induced to take down his flag from the ramparts of the town and give Messina into the keeping of the Templars and Hospitallers until he had come to an agreement with Tancred regarding Joanna.

Further causes of dispute arose not long afterwards. A compromise had been reached between Richard and Tancred, and they soon appeared to be on the best of terms. As a proof of his friendship, Tancred produced letters purporting to be from Philip and containing an invitation to the Sicilians to co-operate in an attack on the English. Philip denied the authenticity of the letters and accused Richard of making the charge only to escape from his engagement to marry Alice, sister of the French king. At that time Berengaria of Navarre was indeed on the way to Sicily to marry Richard, and Cœur de Lion had to pay ten thousand marks as the price of breaking his promise to Alice. Philip and Richard now thoroughly distrusted each other, and the distrust was to affect the course of their joint expedition.

Philip set sail for the Holy Land at the end of March, and Richard left Sicily two weeks later. The French reached Acre safely in the middle of April, but Richard's ships were

dispersed in a storm and the vessel with Berengaria and Joanna on board had to take refuge in Cyprus. The island belonged to the Byzantine Empire, but Isaac Comnenus, who had been sent to it as governor, had rebelled and set himself up as king. He had imprisoned some of the English soldiers and attempted to seize Berengaria and Joanna, and Richard therefore declared war on him. He captured Isaac, took the treasure in the island, and later sold Cyprus to the Temple for a hundred thousand pieces of gold.

Richard arrived at Acre on June 8th, 1191, after a journey of a year. Philip Augustus had done little since his coming nearly two months previously, and Richard's appearance on the scene was hailed with joy by the immense Christian army assembled in the vicinity of the port. A united assault was expected, but Richard fell ill soon after he reached Acre, and Philip Augustus refused to wait until the English king could participate in an attack. The French assault proved unsuccessful, and when, a few weeks later, Richard stormed Acre in turn, Philip would not support him and the Moslems scored another success. But Acre was suffering from famine, and, though Saladin had a large army under him, he could not break through the Christian lines to introduce food into the city. The garrison of Acre therefore determined to capitulate if their lives were spared. They promised a ransom of two hundred thousand gold besants, the release of some three thousand Christian captives, and the return of the true cross. Acre was occupied on July 12th, 1191, but only part of the Christian prisoners received their liberty from the Moslems and the true cross was not returned.

Rebellion broke out almost as soon as the Crusaders entered Acre. Philip Augustus had "the palace of the Templars with all that belonged thereto and Richard took the royal palace. . . . Each king had a part of the city for himself while the army was scattered over the whole town, enjoying a pleasant rest". That division was very satisfactory for the

kings, but not for those who had possessed property in Acre before its capture by the Moslems. They had not fought to win territory for the kings or to enjoy a pleasant rest: their struggle had been to recover their property for themselves and they protested vigorously that Richard and Philip, who had been in the East for only a few weeks, had no right to lay claim to the port. The Temple was the largest owner of property in the city, and Robert de Sabloil, who had been appointed Master of the Order shortly before, led the revolt. The kings were compelled to yield the territory to those who had held it before the Saracen conquest.

Philip had quickly tired of the Crusade, in which he had been completely overshadowed by Richard, and on August 1st he returned to France on the ground of ill-health. Richard was also tempted to leave the Holy Land, for he was surrounded by discontented men. On his journey to the East he had been met at Cyprus by Guy de Lusignan. Guy had ruled Jerusalem only as the consort of his wife, who had since died. Conrad of Montferrat had married Isabel, the next heir, and he challenged Guy's title to the throne. Philip supported Conrad's claims, but Richard took the side of Guy and imposed a settlement which left Guy in possession of the kingdom and gave the reversion to Conrad. It was a decision which did not satisfy the French and which was also unpopular with many of the Syrian Franks.

The ambition to recapture Jerusalem kept Richard in the East. After several weeks spent in Acre, he led a sadly-reduced force along the coast. Saladin marched on the Crusaders' right flank, and on September 7th he launched an attack near Arsuf. Richard divided his army into five battalions with the Templars in the van, and a furious battle ended in a victory for the Christians. "The very flower of all Paganism, from Damascus to Persia, had gathered here; from the Mediterranean Sea to the East there was no bold warrior even in the most distant corner, no valiant race of

people whom Saladin had not called in to his aid by prayer, or pay, or right of dominion, and all in the hope of utterly sweeping the race of Christians from the face of the earth. But in vain; for, thanks to God, he was not strong enough to achieve his wish. And the best flower of all the youth of Christendom—a soldiery tried in war—had flowed thither and, like the finest grain shaken from the ears, was united there from the furthest ends of the earth. If anyone had broken and exterminated this host without a doubt there would have been no one left in the world able to offer resistance.” (*Itinerary*, Archer’s translation.)

After this success, Richard marched to Jaffa, which the Moslems had evacuated leaving the fortifications in ruin. Not until December did the Crusading army leave the port to advance on Jerusalem. The tidings that an attempt was to be made to regain the Holy City aroused tremendous enthusiasm, and men flocked from everywhere to serve under Richard in so glorious a venture. The heavy rains made the advance very slow, but the Crusaders struggled on as far as Beit Nuba. There, however, the order was given to retreat. Richard had been anxious to press forward, but the Templars and the Hospitallers and most of the great nobles opposed him. Even if the Christians took Jerusalem—and that seemed highly improbable—how could it be defended, since the Crusaders would return to Europe as soon as they had fulfilled their vow and seen the holy places? The military Orders and the lords were more anxious to recapture their possessions elsewhere than to see Jerusalem recovered, and Richard was advised first to break Saladin’s hold in other parts of the country before seeking to win the Holy City.

The English king reluctantly agreed to retreat to Ascalon, which was reached at the beginning of 1192 after a terrible journey. Here again the Moslems had destroyed the walls, and the Christians spent the rest of the winter in restoration. Quarrels had been almost constant and they reached their

height during the early months of the new year. Richard was urged to withdraw his support from Guy of Lusignan, and he consented to leave the choice of the ruler to an assembly of the nobles. The assembly elected Conrad of Montferrat to be king. He was assassinated soon afterwards, but the nobles would not consider the return of Guy, and the throne was given to Henry of Champagne, who married Conrad's widow. Guy of Lusignan was consoled with Cyprus. The Templars had paid less than half of the purchase price but could probably have raised the remainder easily. They were, however, unpopular with the islanders who had risen against them, and the Order seems to have welcomed the opportunity to surrender the government of Cyprus and retain only certain estates.

At the end of May, Richard had another success in capturing Darum and he revived his plans of taking Jerusalem. Orders were given for an advance, and the Christians came within a few miles of the Holy City. But again there was a retreat. The former arguments were once more put before Richard, who left the decision to a council of five Templars, five Hospitallers, five French, and five Syrian nobles. The council—the French members dissenting—recommended that the Crusaders should throw themselves on Egypt. Saladin, the majority of the council agreed, must be crushed if the Christians were ever to have peaceful possession of the Holy Land. Richard might rout Moslem armies, but so long as Saladin held Egypt, he had a reservoir from which he could draw unlimited recruits. Egypt therefore must first be reduced if Palestine were to be the permanent possession of Christendom.

Richard promised to support an expedition to Egypt, but he seems to have had no intention of keeping his word. He wanted to return home without further fighting, but, when Saladin attacked Jaffa, he could not resist the challenge. He led a force to the relief of the port and scattered the besiegers

in his last engagement in the East. Negotiations for a truce had several times been attempted, but had been broken off as soon as one side or the other thought itself in a favourable position for attack. Both Richard and Saladin were now anxious for peace—Richard because he was ill and affairs at home required his attention, Saladin because there had been outbreaks of rebellion in his empire. On September 2nd, 1192, the terms of a truce were agreed. Peace was to last for three years; the Christians were to retain Jaffa and Acre and the coast between these towns, and were to be allowed to make pilgrimages to the holy places of Jerusalem. The fortifications of Ascalon were, however, to be destroyed by the Christians, and not rebuilt during the period of the truce.

Five weeks later (October 9th) Richard sailed from Acre. He knew that the Emperor of Germany, the King of France, the Duke of Austria, and other rulers hoped to make him their captive on his return journey, and he appealed to Robert de Sabloil (who was probably English) to assist him to reach England in safety. The Temple had quarrelled with Richard over Guy of Lusignan, the division of the spoil, and over the tactics in the campaign, and Richard appears to have thought that his enemies would not look for him in the company of brethren of the Temple. He is said to have been smuggled on board ship disguised in a Templar's mantle, and he was certainly accompanied by a number of members of the Order as far as Zara in Dalmatia. There he started the overland journey which led first to an Austrian and then to a German prison.

The Third Crusade had resulted in the return to the Christians of almost all the coastal plain possessed by them before the battle of Hittin. The Temple had regained Gaza and many of the fortresses that it had lost, but throughout the campaign, there were frequent quarrels with the king who made such conquests possible. Though the Order never refused to support Richard in his battles against the Moslems,

it was not wholehearted in its co-operation. The Temple and the Hospital had both clamoured for aid from Europe, yet when Christendom sent its armies the military Orders resented the presence of the newcomers. The Temple and the Hospital were accustomed to play the most prominent part in the campaign against Islam and were unwilling to accept the secondary place which Richard imposed upon them. They considered themselves as the best equipped soldiers; they wanted to dictate how the campaign should be waged; and they felt it presumptuous for Richard, who had no experience of warring against the Saracens, to dispute their plans. In the end, their policy was adopted, but Richard, though he followed the advice of the military Orders, always remained the supreme leader, and both the Templars and Hospitallers feared that he would cover himself with too much glory.

Had the two Orders acted together against Richard, the Crusade would have failed completely instead of attaining a measure of success. But while the Temple and the Hospital were jealous of Richard, they were more jealous of each other. When the Templars opposed Richard, the Hospitallers supported him; when the Hospitallers opposed Philip Augustus, the Templars rallied to his side. Both kings had been accompanied from Europe by considerable numbers of Templars and Hospitallers, but the first allegiance of a Templar or Hospitaller was not to his king, but to the Master of his Order. There was no division within the Temple or the Hospital. Each Order was united—united to support Philip or Richard, Conrad of Montferrat or Guy of Lusignan, but preferably to oppose the other.

CHAPTER VIII

CONSTANTINOPLE AND CAIRO

THE war with Saladin had caused a drain upon the treasury of the Temple, but the Order recuperated quickly in finance. The revenue from its possessions was enormous, and in the West alone the Temple is estimated, though the estimate is doubtless too high, to have had an annual income of six million pounds in the thirteenth century. With the increase in trade, the properties of the Temple grew in value, and year by year came new bequests in land or money. As every regular knight must surrender all his possessions on entering the Order, the income from this source also was considerable, and, in addition, there flowed into the treasury the contributions of the temporary serving knights and the sergeants as well as gifts from seculars. The number and value of such gifts fluctuated to a very great extent, but were usually most numerous and valuable when the Holy Land was in danger.

Such wealth aroused the envy of the Church, and disputes between the Order and the ecclesiastics continued to be frequent both in regard to money and to the privileges claimed by the Templars. In 1197, the Patriarch of Jerusalem laid the Order under interdict, an action which was irregular as the Temple had been taken out of his jurisdiction; and the quarrel was only settled by the intervention of the Pope. In the preceding year the Holy See had also been compelled to interfere between the Order and the Patriarch, and the Master of the Temple had been sternly reminded that it was his duty to keep the peace with the head of the Church in the East.

Protests by the Pope or the Patriarch did not, however,

have much effect upon the conduct of the Templars. They felt that the services they had rendered to Christendom put them above all authority. After the Third Crusade, their land and fortresses in the East were considerably extended. Much of the territory which had been recovered belonged to nobles who had fled to Europe, and many of these nobles refused to resume possession of their property. The conquests of Richard Cœur de Lion had not restored faith in the ability of the Christians to resist the infidel. It had rather the contrary effect, for the tacticians argued that if armies from the West under Richard and Philip Augustus had won so limited a success, the Franks must surely be overwhelmed as soon as these armies departed. Not only therefore did absent nobles prefer to remain in Europe, but another exodus of Franks took place when the English and French forces retired.

The Temple erected new fortresses, strengthened fortifications, and spent huge sums in the purchase of lands, while those landowners who had no wish to come back to Palestine showered gifts or castles and other property upon the Order. When the Temple had to buy, it bought in a cheap market, as the only competition was from the Hospital. Ownership of land in Palestine was regarded by the secular knights as much too uncertain when the Moslems had shown themselves so powerful. But Christendom, which had lost faith in the ability of the Christians to resist Islam, expected the military Orders to continue the struggle as long as possible, and the Temple and the Hospital felt bound to set an example of confidence. The contributions which came to them were given to finance the holy war, and any indication that they believed the position to be hopeless would have proved disastrous both to the reputation and income of the Orders. Although therefore many of the brethren shared the fear that the Holy Land would be entirely lost to the Latins, it was the policy of the Temple, as of the Hospital, to accept all

offers of territory if the price were low enough. Before the final expulsion of the Franks from Syria at the end of the thirteenth century, practically the whole of the Christian possessions were in the hands of the military Orders.

Those pessimists who had prophesied the sweeping of the Franks into the sea at the end of the truce were confounded. The Latins often seemed to be on the point of losing everything, but on the whole the balance was in their favour in the East for nearly fifty years after the peace of 1192. Saladin died in the year after Cœur de Lion sailed for Europe, and the empire which he had built up became involved in civil wars. His three sons, El Afdal, El Aziz and El Zahir took Damascus, Egypt, and Aleppo respectively, and Saladin's brother, Saphadin, was allotted Kerak. Saphadin, however, was not satisfied with his portion, and attempted to seize the territories of his nephews. While such dissensions continued among the Moslems, there was safety for the Franks.

When the news of Saladin's death reached Europe, plans were made for a new Crusade, and the Pope (Celestine III) preached the holy war as energetically as his eighty-five years permitted. Neither Richard nor Philip Augustus would embark on another expedition to the East, where their experiences had been so unfortunate, but, encouraged by the news of quarrels in the ranks of the Saracens, men from England and France as well as Italy, Denmark, and Scandinavia flocked to the Holy Land. Henry VI, Emperor of Germany, who had taken the cross in 1195, sent an army of twenty thousand men, and Margaret, Queen of Hungary, led several thousand soldiers to Palestine from her kingdom. These forces collected in 1197 outside Acre, now the rallying-place for armies from the West, but neither the Temple—of which Gilbert Horal had become Master two years previously—nor the Hospital was in favour of hostilities.

Both Orders desired to take greater defensive measures before challenging the Moslems, but the eager recruits from the West had come to regain Jerusalem, and they refused to be restrained. The military Orders could not withhold their aid, and at the end of the year they took part in an advance into Moslem territory. Saphadin replied with an attack on Jaffa and won the city, but soon afterwards the Christians defeated his troops near Tyre. This battle was followed by several successes and the recovery of a number of towns and fortresses by the Christians. The death of Henry VI, however, brought the Crusade to a sudden close, for the Germans, who formed the main part of the army, hastened back to Europe. Amalric of Lusignan, the successor to Henry of Champagne on the throne of Jerusalem, despaired of carrying on the war with his own forces, and he negotiated a truce of five years with the Moslems to run from 1198.

Most of the Franks did not regret the suspension of the campaign which had started so promisingly, and the peace arranged by Amalric was popular in the East if not in the West. Further territory might have been won while Islam was disturbed, but the Franks realised the danger that aggressiveness would lead to a combination of their enemies, and that a united Moslem army might rage through Palestine, as Saladin had done after Hittin, and once again recapture the possessions recovered by Richard Cœur de Lion. It seemed to the majority of the Franks that such a risk was not worth taking, and that the policy of the kingdom should be to preserve what remained in Christian custody rather than try to acquire new territories.

The feeling of hatred against the Moslems had undergone a change, at least so far as the Syrian Franks were concerned. The Koran had been translated in 1143 and the fantastic legends about the religion of the Moslems had faded. Many Christians went to Mahometan universities, where they studied astronomy and mathematics under

Moslem teachers, and prided themselves on conversing in Arabic, but the old bitterness against the adherents of another religion naturally did not die out so easily in Rome. While the Franks in the East adopted an attitude of tolerance, the Holy See prohibited all Arabic studies, thundered against any traffic with the Moslems, and demanded that the enemies of Christ should be expelled from Jerusalem.

Innocent III, who had become Pope at the age of thirty-seven early in 1198, sent out a call for a new Crusade within a few months of his installation. When he looked at the situation in the Holy Land, he wrote, he "was overcome with anguish, bemoaning and weeping so much that from such lamentations his throat became hoarse and through such weeping his eyes became dim. But, in the words of the Prophet, 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember her, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth'. Still does the Apostolic See shout aloud, and like a trumpet does she raise her voice, endeavouring to arouse the nations of Christendom to fight the battles of Christ and to avenge the injuries done to Him who was crucified. . . . The Sepulchre of the Lord, which the Prophet foretold should be glorious, has been profaned by the unrighteous and has thereby been made inglorious. Our glory, of which the Apostle speaks when he says, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ', is held in the hands of the enemy, and our Lord Jesus Christ who, by dying for us, led our captivity captive, as though Himself a captive, is driven from His inheritance".

The Pope was determined to restore the Patriarch to the Holy City, and in the following year he sent arms and money to the military Orders. The truce, however, had not yet expired, and no new campaign could be instituted against the Moslems. In any case, Innocent realised that without

an army from the West the capture of Jerusalem was unlikely, and he worked energetically to encourage the princes of Christendom to fight Islam and achieve the great ambition. He was convinced that a Crusade could succeed only if the soldiers who took part in the work were pious and godly, and he suggested that the loss of Jerusalem and the wood of the true cross had been permitted by God as a test of Christendom. The Christians, the Pope wrote, had almost all been given up to the lusts of the flesh, and Jerusalem and the true cross had been removed from their keeping as a punishment. Such grave afflictions, however, were not only a punishment—they were an opportunity. Christ had, as it were, submitted Himself to crucifixion a second time when He allowed the Saracens to occupy the Holy City and seize the cross on which He had suffered; and He had done so in order to open a way to salvation to His followers. Why, it was asked, had Christ not overwhelmed the infidels and taken Jerusalem and the true cross from their custody? Innocent gave the explanation that Christ wished to see “if anyone would sorrow at His sorrows” and would fight for the recovery of His city and the relic which He had hallowed with His blood.

Inspired by the Pope's vigorous appeals, Europe began to feel again something of the old fervour for the holy war, and emissaries sent by Innocent throughout Christendom found many lords willing to take the cross. Thibault of Champagne, Louis of Blois, Simon de Montfort, Baldwin of Flanders and thousands of lesser lords and commoners enrolled themselves for the Fourth Crusade. That Crusade, which Innocent had hoped to see triumphantly sweeping all before it on the way to the Holy City, never reached Palestine. Three years were spent in preparation for what the Pope intended to be the grandest and most glorious of all the expeditions from the West, but his views were not shared by the leaders of the expedition. They refused to

accept his dictation, and the Fourth Crusade developed into a huge commercial swindle. At an early stage, the idea of sailing to the Holy Land was abandoned, and plans were made to attack Egypt. Such a project had much to recommend it, and if the Crusaders had thrown themselves on Cairo, as was at one time apparently the intention, the result might have been a great victory. The proposal to attack Egypt was, however, also abandoned in turn.

The Crusaders contracted with Venice for transport, but they could not pay the agreed price, and the Venetians therefore suggested that the Crusaders should attack Zara on the Dalmatian coast. Venice had long cast envious eyes on that port and promised that when it had been captured the Venetian galleys would be put at the disposal of the Crusade. This disgraceful pact was accepted and the Crusaders captured Zara for Venice. The expedition might now have proceeded to Palestine had it not been for a further piece of treachery. Boniface of Montferrat—brother of that Conrad of Montferrat who had caused so much dissension at the time of the Third Crusade—was now in command of the Crusade, and his eyes were fixed on Constantinople. The Byzantines had been condemned by the West as responsible for many of the disasters that had overcome earlier armies of Crusaders, and, though some of the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade refused to take part in an assault on Constantinople, Boniface was able to obtain the support of most of the leaders, while the new destination was undoubtedly popular with the commoners.

There are few more disreputable enterprises than this descent on the Byzantine Empire by the Fourth Crusade. Boniface of Montferrat affected to fight in a just cause. Alexius III, the Emperor of the Byzantines, had seized the throne from his brother, Isaac Angelus, and, after blinding his rival, imprisoned him in a dungeon. The deposed Emperor's son, also named Alexius, sought assistance at every

court in Europe, but he had no success until he met Boniface. That leader set himself up as the champion of the imprisoned Angelus, and in April he led the Crusaders from Zara to Constantinople. Largely owing to the efforts of the Venetians, who had their own score to settle with the Byzantines, the Crusaders triumphed and Alexius III had to flee from the capital.

Isaac Angelus and the young Alexius were placed on the throne as co-rulers, and almost at once dissension broke out. The Crusaders had been promised 200,000 marks for their aid, but only half the amount was paid. After a winter spent outside Constantinople, the Christians were faced with a sudden change in the situation. The populace of the capital rose against their rulers and installed a new Emperor, Mourtzoughphlos. Isaac Angelus died of shock, the young Alexius was strangled, and Mourtzoughphlos dared the Crusaders to interfere. The challenge was accepted, and, after careful preparations for an assault on the most impregnable of cities, the Westerners attacked in March. Constantinople fell to them in April, and a month later the Crusaders chose Baldwin of Flanders as Latin Emperor of Byzantium.¹

Boniface of Montferrat had repeated many times that the Crusade would proceed to Palestine or Egypt after securing justice for Isaac Angelus, but when Constantinople was annexed by the Latins, the promises to send assistance to the Franks were forgotten. The capture of Constantinople, which might have strengthened the Christian cause in the Holy Land, actually weakened it. The bitter antagonism between the Franks and Byzantines had ruined all efforts to bring about an alliance; and the Byzantines had more often shown a desire to act with the Moslems than with the Franks.

¹ He ruled for only a year. His successor, Henry of Flanders, occupied the throne till 1216 and was succeeded by Peter de Courtenay (1216-17), Robert (1221-28), and John of Brienne (1228-37). The last Latin Emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin II, ruled for twenty-four years (1237-61).

In recent years, however, signs of a better understanding had appeared, and effective military co-operation between the Franks and the Byzantines had become a possibility.

Now that the Latins held Constantinople, the fear of treachery on the part of Byzantium was removed, but so also was the hope of a campaign in which the Saracens would be faced with a united army of Franks and Byzantines. Baldwin of Flanders and his successors who ruled in Constantinople for the next half a century were always in a precarious position. Far from giving aid to Palestine, they themselves had to seek it to maintain their empire against attack. The princes of Europe were already wearied by the repeated appeals from the Holy Land for reinforcements; now appeals for men to support the Latins in Constantinople began to grow as monotonous, and the emissaries of Byzantium and Palestine competed with one another for the favour of the courts of the West.

In the past the Holy Land had been the magnet which drew the Westerners who sought adventure overseas. After the Latin occupation of Constantinople, however, many of the adventurous made for the Byzantine Empire, where the need for their services was no less great and the rewards held out to the daring were even greater. Nor was it only by going to the Holy Land that a man could have the privileges, granted by the Church and respected by the secular authorities, extended to those who took part in a Crusade. Rome professed to be shocked that Boniface of Montferrat had diverted the expedition to Constantinople, but the Holy See, which had so often and so anxiously tried to make the Byzantines subject to its authority, nevertheless hastened to take advantage of this opportunity to install a Latin patriarch in the capital and proclaim the Empire as under the ecclesiastical government of the Church of Rome. The Pope's belief that the Greek Church would accept his authority was, however, disappointed; for though the Latins were in power

the Byzantine priests refused to acknowledge the Roman Church. They were contemptuous of Rome, and laughed at the pretensions of the Pope to be head of the Christian Church. In a long statement, the Greek Patriarch of Antioch proved to his own satisfaction that Rome's claim to the special protection of St. Peter was unfounded. The saint, he pointed out, had been received with reverence in Antioch, where he had ruled the Church for seven years, whereas in Rome he had been despised and ill-treated. When Rome would not admit this contention, the Patriarch promptly excommunicated the Holy See!

A few thousand of the men who enrolled for the Fourth Crusade had sailed for Palestine, and their aid proved valuable in helping to beat off the attacks made by the Moslems of Aleppo. During the first years of the thirteenth century, however, neither the Franks nor the Saracens embarked on any extensive campaign. In 1201 Syria had suffered from severe earthquakes. A large part of Damascus and Nablus had been destroyed, the walls of Acre and Tripoli had fallen, and many other towns had been more or less seriously damaged. There were further earthquakes two years later and again in 1204, and both Christians and Moslems were too busily engrossed with the work of reconstruction to think of active warfare. Egypt was undergoing an acute famine, and this was followed by a pestilence, which spread to Palestine and took a heavy toll. Earthquakes and disease combined to cause a new panic among the Franks, and many nobles fled from the country. Land was offered for sale in Palestine even more cheaply than at the end of the preceding century and the Temple—of which Philip Duplessis had been Grand Master since 1201—and the Hospital were, as before, almost the only purchasers.

In the midst of these misfortunes, the Franks would have found it difficult to resist a strong Moslem attack. Saphadin was steadily building up an empire and by 1203 he had added

Egypt and Damascus to his own territory of Kerak. He had, however, still further conquests to make at the expense of his fellow-Moslems, and he agreed to a truce of six years to last till 1209. The Christians used this period of truce to good effect. When the nobles held most of the territory, little attempt had been made to prepare the kingdom for the attacks which might be expected at the end of a truce and opportunities had been frittered away. The great landowners were now the Templars and Hospitallers, and they did not repeat the mistakes of the nobles. Before the expiry of the peace, the defence of the kingdom had been greatly strengthened, and the Temple and the Hospital, satisfied that their possessions could be protected by small garrisons in formidable castles, were ready to support a campaign against Saphadin.

But the power of Saphadin could not be broken without assistance from the West. The Holy See gave its support to the project of a Crusade, but at the same time it offered similar indulgences to those who went to fight the Moors in Spain, and in 1208 it extended the privileges to men who went no further than Provence for their fighting. The Christians of Provence had murdered a papal legate sent to combat the heretical doctrines being taught there, and Innocent launched the Albigensian Crusade, which turned the land of the troubadours into a bloody battlefield. Earlier in the year, the Pope had rebuked the Templars for their pride, and sternly reminded them that they were permitted to conduct services in places under interdict only at stated intervals. The brethren, he said, had the cross of Christ on their breast, but they had forgotten His teaching. Any scoundrel could be taken under the protection of the Order by paying for the privilege, and the priests of the Temple gave to excommunicated men all the consolations of the Church, including Christian burial, thus "seeking to make alive those whom they knew to be dead". The Holy See and the Temple were

therefore in dispute, but the Temple was the permanent army of the Church and could not hold aloof when the Church called it to war. Preceptories of the Order in several countries sent brethren to serve in the Albigenian Crusade, and they distinguished themselves by their ferocity. The Pope had often lamented that Christians would not assume the cross, but now he had no reason to complain that the response to his summons was tepid. The army of Templars and others who descended upon Provence fought joyfully against the Albigenians and slaughtered with relish.

When Christians could earn the same merit by fighting in Provence as by fighting in the Holy Land, the number of Crusaders who chose to go to Palestine naturally dwindled. In 1210, however, three hundred knights and a small army of commoners landed at Acre. They were under the command of John of Brienne, who had been chosen as the new King of Jerusalem. On the death of Amalric of Lusignan in 1205, the crown descended to Marie, daughter of Isabella by her second husband, Conrad of Montferrat. Philip Augustus of France was asked to nominate a husband for the girl queen and, to the surprise of the Franks, chose the comparatively undistinguished knight, John of Brienne. The new ruler knew himself to be unpopular, and he was ambitious to prove his worth by re-opening the war against the Moslems, with whom the treaty of 1203 had recently expired. The Temple and the Hospital felt that military measures against Saphadin could not hope to succeed unless a much greater army came from the West, but they responded to John's summons. At first the Moslems put up little resistance and John was able to make inroads into Saphadin's territory. The king had, however, to recognise that his forces were insufficient to meet the army which was being assembled to face him, and he retired quickly before Saphadin could give battle.

Now began another series of appeals to Christendom. John of Brienne had ambitious plans for recapturing

Jerusalem, and he assured Pope Innocent that even a small army would make its recovery certain. The Pope was encouraged by John's confidence, and even more by the calculation from the Bible that Islam was now due to be destroyed. At the end of 1215 he proclaimed that Europe must devote itself for two years to the preparation of an expedition to the East, and that anyone who sent arms or anything useful for war to the Moslems or traded in any way with the enemy was liable to excommunication. The Temple and the Hospital had heard many such pronouncements and had known them pass quite unheeded in a continent which seemed to have lost all interest in the Holy Land; but they were optimistic of the results of this appeal. For Frederick II, Emperor of Germany, had taken the cross, and he inspired confidence. Frederick, however, was not to come to the East for several years, and when he did set out on a Crusade his most bitter foes were not the Moslems but the Templars and Hospitallers.

While the Pope was unable to persuade Frederick to enlist for the Fifth Crusade, the command of the Holy See was obeyed by many of the nobles. Innocent had fixed June 1st, 1217, for the departure of the great expedition, but before that date many Crusaders had started for the East, and during the summer thousands of men came to Acre from every country in Christendom. An army of between thirty and forty thousand was collected, and, as the Moslems were unprepared to meet a determined attack from a force of this size, the Christians might have gained much land. The campaign was started confidently by the Crusaders, who marched to the assault of a fortress on Mount Tabor. No relief was sent to the small Moslem garrison, and the Christians appeared certain to succeed in their initial effort in the expedition. Superstition, however, robbed them of victory. Part of the wall of the fortress collapsed, burying a number of the besiegers beneath it, and panic spread among the Crusaders.

The catastrophe was regarded as the judgment of God on His people, and the Christians broke in terror. The military Orders were almost alone in maintaining discipline, but their example and the commands of the secular leaders were alike useless to combat the superstitious fears of the army, which rushed in wild disorder to Acre. The Templars and Hospitallers, after continuing the siege for a short time, had to withdraw owing to lack of support. The Crusaders regained their courage at Acre. Fresh detachments from the West had arrived, bringing with them stories of wonderful manifestations. The tales of miraculous escapes of ships threatened by all kinds of danger were looked upon as a proof that God, if He had been displeased with the Christians, had now forgiven them and was fighting on their side. King Andrew of Hungary, the commander-in-chief of the Crusade, resigned the leadership and made way for King John, who proved himself much more energetic. John did not propose to continue the fight in Palestine. He agreed with the military Orders that the Moslem power in Egypt must be broken as a first step.

William of Chartres, the Master of the Temple at this time, wrote to the Pope (now Honorius III), defending the proposal to descend upon Egypt, and explaining that, once Cairo had been taken, the Crusaders would easily recapture the Holy City. William had no qualms about the adventure, for, he tells Honorius, never in recollection have the Moslems been less formidable, and he expresses the hope that God will make them grow weaker with each day that passes.

The army wintered at Acre, and in May, 1218, the Templars, who had the best equipped navy in the Holy Land, began the voyage to Egypt. The first objective was Damietta, on the delta of the Nile, but the belief that the port would quickly fall before the assault of forty thousand Christians was soon dissipated. The strong fortress guarding the town defied all the efforts of the attackers for ten weeks, and before

it was taken the Temple had lost a ship and over five thousand Christians had fallen. The difficulty of capturing the fortress cooled the ardour of some of the Crusaders and they withdrew to Europe, although threatened with excommunication by the Pope. Much more serious than such desertions, however, were the ravages of a pestilence which broke out in the Crusading camp. The Temple lost William de Chartres, but the new Master of the Order, Peter de Montaignu, was quite as enthusiastic as his predecessor for the war in Egypt, and when some of the Christian leaders proposed a retreat, he defeated the suggestion.

The reduction in the strength of the Crusaders was more than counterbalanced by the new bands which came from the West. Numerous attacks were made on Damietta during the summer, but all of them were repulsed and in the autumn operations practically ceased. The position of the Crusaders became critical during the winter. The pestilence still raged in the camp; the overflowing of the Nile swept away the baggage and supplies; and to the horror of disease was added famine. The proposal to end the campaign was again raised, but the Temple was as determined as ever that Damietta should be taken. And now the Crusaders had a leader more subservient to the military Orders than John of Brienne. Pope Honorius had despatched Cardinal Pelagius to Egypt as his legate, and Pelagius was a fiery fanatic who scoffed at withdrawal.

The legate claimed that, as the Christian army had been raised by the Pope and fought in the name of the Church, it must be under his command. John of Brienne angrily refused to surrender the leadership, and a long and bitter tussle took place between the king and Pelagius. The king had contributed comparatively few men to the besieging force and he had made many enemies during the expedition, but on the other hand the idea of serving under a prelate was distasteful to many of the warriors. The quarrels lasted throughout the

whole campaign, with sometimes Pelagius, sometimes John in command. The legate, however, won most of the honours and had the staunch support of the military Orders. The Templars and Hospitallers explained to the king that, as papal soldiers, they could not refuse to obey the papal legate; but the Orders were only too pleased to have the opportunity to defy their ruler. Pelagius did not admit that he had any limitations. In matters of war, however, he accepted the guidance of the Temple and the Hospital, and the Orders knew that so long as he was in command the conduct of the campaign would be in their hands. While assuring John of Brienne that they supported the legate only because they must, the Orders encouraged Pelagius to insist upon supreme control.

In the spring the assaults on Damietta were renewed, but the port still held out. The inhabitants of the city were, however, now faced with famine, and they declared to the Sultan that they would surrender unless assistance were sent. Saphadin had died shortly before, and the new Sultan, El Kamel, was not yet firmly seated on the throne. His army was discontented and the Mongols were threatening an attack, and in these circumstances he offered to make peace. If the Christians evacuated Egypt, he would return Jerusalem and most of the Holy Land and also restore the true cross.

"Many of our pilgrims judged these offers important and proper to satisfy us", writes Jacques de Vitry, the chronicler of the Fifth Crusade, "but those who knew by experience the fraud of these men who change unceasingly and principally the Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights, the legate, the Patriarch, the archbishops, the bishops, all the clergy and some of the pilgrims, made nothing of their false words, thinking that the Saracens had no other intention than, under the veil of a simulated peace, to disperse the army of Christ as soon as the pilgrims had retired". John of Brienne was in favour of acceptance, and Pelagius might have con-

sented had it not been for the opposition of the military Orders. They claimed that it would be dishonourable to accept such a peace when all Egypt could be won by a little further effort, and they represented that the making of the proposal was a proof that El Kamel feared the Christian might. Pelagius was convinced and he rejected the Sultan's offer.

The Temple and the Hospital used arguments which they may have known to be unsound, but their view of the situation was nevertheless probably the correct one. It was true that the Christians were offered great concessions as the price of peace, but the Templars and Hospitallers thought of the future. If the terms were accepted, the Crusading army would return to Europe, and the Holy Land would then be left with a force wholly inadequate to protect it against attack. The Orders had consistently maintained that Jerusalem could only be safely held by the Christians provided that the Moslem power was utterly broken, and for many years their declared policy had been the capture of Cairo. The Holy City might be ceded to the Christians, but the Franks must rule in Cairo as well before Jerusalem would be secure from the aggression of Islam.

Much activity on the part of the Crusaders followed the rejection of El Kamel's terms. The Templars were anxious to justify their advice and lead the Christians into Damietta. Jacques de Vitry had little respect for the Christians in the East, whom he scathingly describes as men who had acquired their fathers' lands but despised their fathers' good morals. Only the Italians, he remarks, showed prudence and discretion; the Germans, French, Bretons, and English were careless and reckless, rash and extravagant, and greedy in eating and drinking. But the chronicler pays many tributes to the valour of the Templars at Damietta.¹ They were

¹ He comments, however, that though the Templars boast of having nothing individually, they wished to possess everything as an Order and he castigates them for their cupidity.

in the forefront of every fight, and on several occasions they saved the Christian army from destruction. When the Moslems made a sudden attack on the camp in the summer of 1219, it was the Templars who prevented a panic by leading a desperate charge. "The Templars", writes de Vitry, "were filled with the spirit of Gideon, and their example was an inspiration to the other Christians".

The Crusaders captured Damietta only after a siege of eighteen months (November, 1219). Now came further quarrels. John of Brienne—who had left Egypt in disgust but had been induced to return—wanted to march on Jerusalem, but the military Orders again claimed that Cairo should be the first objective. Cardinal Pelagius adopted their view. An immediate advance on Cairo was, however, considered to be impracticable. The Moslems of Damascus, taking advantage of the absence of the greater part of the military monks, were ravaging the Christian possessions near Tyre and Acre, and the Master of the Temple and a strong force of knights were despatched to expel the invaders. The Damascenes took Cæsarea and some other places, but their advance was stopped and most of the Templars then returned to Damietta.

Nothing had been done in Egypt in their absence. Reinforcements continued to come from Europe, and, though the pestilence still raged, there was no shortage of men. Pelagius believed that Frederick II would sail to Egypt with a great army. The Emperor had several times promised to set out, but the Crusaders waited in vain for his arrival during the whole of 1220. He made another solemn vow that he would reach Egypt in the spring of 1221, but again he found an excuse for lingering in Europe. His only contribution to the Crusade was a force of five hundred knights under Herman de Salza, the Master of the Teutonic Knights. Having wasted a year and a half at Damietta, the Crusaders decided to wait no longer for the

unreliable Emperor and with a force of fifty thousand men, Pelagius began the march towards Cairo.

In the meantime, El Kamel had marshalled a considerable army and he awaited the Crusaders at Mansourah. The Sultan was still willing to make peace, and he renewed his offer to restore the Holy Land and return the true cross to Christian custody. Pelagius pointed out that such terms had been offered before the capture of Damietta and he asked for further concessions. While negotiations were proceeding, the Sultan's army was strengthened by new levies and he refused to improve upon his offer. A month was passed at Mansourah, and the delay proved fatal to the Christians. The banks of the Nile overflowed. The camp was flooded, and when the Egyptians cut off the Christians from their base at Damietta, the invaders were faced with famine. The Master of the Temple reported the disasters in a letter to the Temple in England: "Our provisions were lost, many men were swept into the stream, and we could make no progress. The water continued to rise, and we lost our horses and saddles and our baggage and everything that we had. We could neither advance nor retreat and we did not know where to turn. . . . We had no food, and, being like fish caught in a net, we could do nothing but sue for peace". The Egyptians were anxious only to get rid of the invaders and they granted a truce on condition that the Christians evacuated Damietta and returned to Palestine immediately. The defeated army sailed back to Acre. Once again the dissension among the Franks had ruined the chance to regain Jerusalem.

CHAPTER IX

THE TEMPLE IN EUROPE

THE Temple was divided into a number of areas or provinces: in the East, the provinces were Jerusalem, Antioch, Tripoli and Greece; in the West, the provinces were France, England, Germany and Hungary, Portugal, Aragon, Castille, Upper and Central Italy, and Apulia and Sicily. Jerusalem was the leading province, and the Master—or Grand Master, to distinguish him from the Masters of the provinces—must reside within the frontiers of the Holy Land. He had his headquarters at the Temple in the Holy City until the Christians were expelled in 1187; and then at Antioch and later at Castle Pilgrim near Acre.

The Masters of the provinces were sometimes known as Grand Preceptors or Grand Priors, and directly under them were the Preceptors (or Priors), who often had jurisdiction over dozens of houses; each house was under the charge of a Commander. The great officers of the Order took a special oath before being installed. They swore to respect the Rule of the Order, to be obedient and faithful to the Pope and the Grand Master, to defend the teaching of the Church, especially in respect of such disputed doctrines as the Virgin birth and the Trinity. They undertook to serve in the Holy Land or anywhere else they might be sent, never to surrender the possessions of the Order to the enemy, and to prefer death to surrender or flight if faced by more than three infidels. The chroniclers boast that one Templar was a match for a hundred Moslems, and two Templars for a thousand of the enemy; but the Temple itself had no such

illusions. More than three Moslems were regarded as too much for a brother.

Matters which affected only the province of Jerusalem were decided at chapters attended by the Preceptors and other leading officers of that province under the presidency of the Grand Master; matters which affected the Order throughout the East, however, were settled at chapters composed of the Grand Preceptors of Antioch and Tripoli and other leading officers of these provinces as well as the Grand Master and the leading officers of the province of Jerusalem. The supreme authority of the Order was the general chapter consisting of the Grand Preceptors and other principal officers from all the provinces under the direction of the Grand Master. As, however, Grand Preceptors from the West could rarely travel to the East to attend such a general chapter, the control of the Order was to a very considerable extent in the hands of the Grand Master and the Grand Preceptors of Antioch and Tripoli. The nearest approach to a complete assembly of the officers of the Temple took place when the Grand Master visited Europe. At such times—and they were very rare indeed—he summoned the Grand Preceptors of the provinces of the West to a chapter at Paris and the decisions then reached were binding on the Order.

The brotherhood had been founded by French knights, and, among the countries of the West, the Temple had become most influential in France. Paris controlled Holland and the Netherlands as well as all the brethren of the Order in France. The Grand Preceptor had his headquarters at the Temple in Paris and was the first officer of the Order in the West. At intervals he called all the other Grand Preceptors in Europe to Paris for the discussion of the affairs of the brotherhood, and this chapter of the West corresponded to the council of the East held under the Grand Master.

After Paris, the most important centre of the Order was in London. Henry I and Henry II had given generously to the brethren; Richard I, though he later quarrelled with the Templars, endowed them with various properties; and John heaped land and privileges upon the Order to such an extent that it became a scandal. The first English house of the brethren had been opened in Chancery Lane, London, by Hugh de Payens in 1128. This house, the original Temple of London, proved insufficient for the needs of the Order when it grew in wealth and numbers, and the Order therefore acquired a site on the Thames Embankment. Here was built the New Temple; the church, round in form like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, was dedicated on February 10th, 1185, by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Heraclius, when he was on his unsuccessful visit to Henry II to beseech that king's aid for the Franks. The Temple in London was the residence of the Grand Preceptor of England; the king frequently lived in it; the papal legates usually made it their headquarters while in England; and the ecclesiastics often held their deliberations upon the affairs of the Church in England within its walls.

Scotland and Ireland each had its own Grand Preceptor, but these officers were subsidiary to the Grand Preceptor of England, though the latter apparently did not attempt to exercise much control over them. Every province was to a large extent self-governing and each Grand Preceptor had his own organisation modelled upon that of Jerusalem, and was a leader and administrator with wide powers of discretion. Appointments within his own province were usually filled as he decided, but the Temple at Jerusalem retained the right to cancel such appointments and sometimes exercised its veto.

While the Grand Preceptor was in practice almost a dictator within his own territory, in theory the Order was democratic. Once a year a chapter of the leading officers of

the Temple was held by the Grand Preceptor of each province. In Great Britain, the Grand Preceptor of England presided over the chapter, to which the leading officers in England and the Grand Preceptors of Scotland and Ireland were summoned. Letters from the Holy Land, which were always being received by the provinces, were discussed, and the action to be taken was decided by the chapter; accounts of the revenue were presented and reports given of the conditions in each area. According to the state of the Holy Land, it was laid down how many knights and sergeants should be sent to the East; arrangements for transport were settled; and new regulations drawn up as necessary. But though the chapter had the nominal power, the Grand Preceptor of a province could usually sway the brethren as he wished.

In addition to the yearly chapter, the Grand Preceptor travelled through his territory and held local chapters in various parts of the country. These assemblies dealt with all matters which were not important enough for submission to the provincial chapter or which required immediate settlement. New recruits were examined, lesser officers appointed, and complaints investigated. The decisions of such local chapters could be challenged by the general chapter of the province, but against the ruling of the latter there was no appeal except to the general council of the West or to Jerusalem. Reports of the general chapters of every province were sent to the Grand Master, who rarely intervened unless specifically asked to do so.

The Bull of Alexander III had established the authority of the Grand Master over the whole Order and the control was maintained by means of Visitors General. These officers were charged with the inspection and supervision of the work of the Grand Preceptors and reported to Jerusalem on the affairs of each province. Visitors General were the plenipotentiaries of the Grand Master and acted in his name.

They could remove any of the officers, insist upon revisions of practice, quash decisions, and introduce new regulations. When Visitors were first introduced, their presence was welcomed in the provinces, for, with their experience of the administration of the Temple and their greater knowledge of the policy and needs of the Order, they were often able to give valuable advice and, speaking with the authority of the Grand Master, they settled quarrels in the provinces. Later, however, these emissaries were resented by the Grand Preceptors. The great officers of the Temple considered that they should be unchallenged in their territories, and friction was inevitable when the Visitors tried to over-rule the Preceptors.

The most common causes of dispute were finance and recruits. In the early years of the Order, the houses in the West existed only for the collection of revenue and the recruitment of men for the war against the infidel. The Templars in charge of the preceptories considered themselves as merely temporarily removed from the scene of action, and were eager to send as much money and as many soldiers as possible to the Holy Land. But the idea that almost all the revenue of the Temple should go to the Holy Land and that the duty of every Templar was to serve in the East passed quickly. The Order never lost its appeal to knights and commoners who thirsted to face the Saracens, but it had soon begun to attract men who wanted to enjoy the prestige attached to the Temple without undergoing hardships in the East and who protested that the wealth of the Temple could be used better elsewhere than in Jerusalem.

To such men, the holy war in Palestine had ceased to be the sole, or even the principal, end of the Order. The Temple was courted by the princes of the West as the number of its properties increased. Europe had no better disciplined forces than the Templars and the support of the Order might decide the fortunes of a struggle even though its strength

in any one country was comparatively small. While the Order was fighting a losing struggle in the East, its influence in the West was growing steadily, and many of the knights saw no reason why the energies of the organisation should be dissipated in a hopeless contest against the Moslem when Europe offered safer and more profitable fields for their services.

That an organisation of thousands of soldiers scattered throughout Christendom and the East could maintain the ideals of the few dozen enthusiasts under Hugh de Payens was too much to expect, and it was impossible for the Temple to escape the general tendency of the century to minimise the importance of the fight with Islam. The opportunities offered for advancement by membership of the red cross knights were obvious, and the greedy and the ambitious took the vows of the Temple with the object of using the power of the Order for purposes other than the protection of the Holy Land. Such brethren naturally tended to attain positions of authority by their thrustfulness, and the control of the Order passed into their keeping.

Some of the Grand Preceptors and other officers of the Order, with wealth flowing to them from the wide territories of the Temple, fell to the temptation to use it for their own aggrandisement. They maintained luxurious establishments which rivalled those of the princes, they were attended by a magnificent bodyguard, and they withheld for their own expenses a large part of the money that should have been sent to the Holy Land. The Visitors General protested against such extravagant expenditure, but while they might suppress isolated offenders, they were powerless to stamp out an abuse which showed itself in most of the preceptories of Europe. An increase in the amount of money sent to Jerusalem might be forthcoming for a short time as a result of complaints by a Visitor, but the share retained by the Grand Preceptors and other officers was soon as great as formerly.

In regard to recruits, the Visitors General were more successful. They could not argue that the Temple in the East lacked money, but they could with justice affirm that the brethren in the Holy Land were fighting against fearful odds and that only a constant flow of men could maintain the strength of the organisation. The Grand Preceptors were readier to provide recruits than money; but they were not prepared to supply all the reinforcements for which Jerusalem asked. In times of crisis, the preceptories of Europe contributed large numbers of soldiers to serve in the Holy Land. Generally, however, the western officers of the Order wished to retain more men than the Visitor thought justifiable.

The reputation of the Temple had been won in the East, but if the Order had not opened up its thousands of preceptories throughout Europe and maintained its bands of trained knights and sergeants in every country, its influence in the West would have been comparatively small. The people might admire the deeds of the Templars in the Holy Land, the kings encourage the warriors of the red cross in the struggle against the Saracens, but both princes and people were more affected by what they saw of the might of the Order at home. The Temple never ceased to seek for land, and its possessions in Europe were equalled only by those of the Hoſpital and the Church proper. The strongest princes hesitated to offend an organisation which had so much wealth and so many men at its command as the Temple, and the weaker princes tried to buy its friendship with bribes.

As the importance of the Order in every country depended to a large extent upon the number of men that it could muster, the provincial Masters refused to weaken their position by meeting the demands of Jerusalem in full, and the arrival of the Visitor General was therefore nearly always the signal for a tussle. The Grand Preceptors might report by letter that they had reduced the number of Templars under their control to the barest minimum, but they could not support

such statements when the Visitors saw the preceptories to be overflowing. A Visitor would go from house to house, enquiring into the numbers and duties of those residing there, arranging new divisions of work, transferring some of the tasks from the younger to the older men. He specified the number to be sent to the Holy Land and, as it were, chose the draft. The Preceptors were unable to retain all the men whom they would have liked to keep beside them, but doubtless they contrived to make out a good case for the exemption of those whom they particularly wished to remain at home, whether or not these brethren were the most valuable to the work of the Order.

The abuses which showed themselves in the Order—the love of luxury and display, the pride and arrogance, the ambition to achieve high office and personal wealth—were at first confined to the great centres of the Temple, such as Paris and London; but, though the Order always had many recruits devoted to the tenets of the primitive Rule, such abuses spread quickly in every part of the provinces. It was difficult for the Templars to withstand the temptation to regard themselves as superior beings. They were a highly favoured class, having both the homage due to warriors and the respect due to men associated with the Church. A Templar was protected from the ban of any ecclesiastic, other than the Pope himself. He was almost above the law and to him were accorded privileges denied to everyone else almost without exception. His Order had the right of sanctuary in many places, could open churches which were closed even to the bishops, had its own burial grounds, its own places of worship, its thousands of rich houses, and was represented in every country in Christendom.

In England, King John, in the hope of obtaining the aid of the Order against his barons, had heaped many benefits upon it. A Templar need not plead except before the king or his chief justice; and anyone who sheltered under

the red cross was safe from interference by the Church or State. People who had no connection with the Temple raised the symbol of the Order when they fell foul of the king or the prelates, and a law had to be passed to restrict the use of the all-powerful red cross to bona fide members of the Order and their servants. This, however, brought about little improvement; for the Temple sold to criminals the right to use the red cross over their houses, and many years passed before a stop was put to the nuisance.

The Templars were to be found in positions of authority in every land. They were the representatives of the Pope and the princes. The crown jewels and the public money were often in the keeping of the Temple; pensions granted by the ruler were paid through it; the collection of taxes was entrusted to its officers. Even if the duty of collection was not given to the Temple, the proceeds of almost every tax passed through its hands. The contributions to be sent by the English Church to the Holy See were handed over to the care of the Temple in London, and the Master of the Temple in Paris and the Masters in other centres of the Order fulfilled a similar office. For the Temple was safe. If money were given into the custody of the bishops, anyone who tried to steal it must run the risk of the ecclesiastical ban, but kings and princes and others were sometimes willing to face that penalty in their lust for gold. The Templars, however, were not only protected by the Church, but could defend by force of arms whatever was entrusted to them. The Church had spiritual weapons, the secular power had temporal ones, but only the religio-military Orders had both temporal power and spiritual authority behind them.

After acting as the depository where the wealth of the kings and princes, the barons, the merchants and the Church was held, the Temple adopted other banking functions. Barter was common in the thirteenth century, but one result of the growth of trade had been the need for additional

currency. The mints had been kept busy, without, however, successfully coping with the demands that were made on them. When gold was available, transport proved inconvenient within the boundaries of a state, and it was dangerous as well as expensive to send money out of a country. The Temple seized the chance to provide facilities for the transfer of deposits, and its organisation and its reputation for probity made the Order admirably equipped to establish a credit system.

At first the service was intended solely for the use of pilgrims. Knights and commoners who went to the Holy Land did not wish to carry their wealth with them, but they wanted to be supplied with money while residing in the East. A deposit was therefore made in the Temple of Paris, London, or elsewhere, and the depositor could then draw on the houses of the Order in Jerusalem, Acre, or Tripoli to the extent of his credit. Those who were leaving the Holy Land to take up residence in Europe could pay their wealth into the Temple in some Syrian town and receive a credit on one of the Western houses. Where actual money had to be transferred, the Temple was able to undertake such work more economically and securely than any other organisation owing to the regular communication that it maintained with all parts of Christendom and the Holy Land.

The advantage of the system for commercial purposes was quickly realised. The trade between the Holy Land and Europe was considerable, and the facilities offered by the Temple were eagerly welcomed. The merchant in London who received goods from Acre need only deposit the amount due at the Temple on the Embankment, and the shipper could obtain payment through the Temple in Acre. Such transactions were not confined to payments between the East and West, but were common between all the countries of Christendom. The letters of credit issued by the Temple were honoured in every Christian land and traders accepted

them willingly. The Order also became the exchange brokers of the day, and the system of international banking which it founded was remarkably complete for the thirteenth century. The Church condemned usury, but the Temple lent money to kings and merchants and collected its interest under the guise of rent, and the Holy See made no protest, though the Church never ceased to denounce the Jew moneylenders.

The Pope could depend upon the Templars as his permanent army, but the new functions which had been adopted by the Order made the military activities of the institution comparatively unimportant to the brethren in the West. A Templar need no longer live only for the struggle against the infidel. There were other things open to him, and, if he had rank or ability, his prospects of advancement were dazzling. Kings chose Templars for their diplomats and their trusted counsellors; the Pope often made members of the Order his emissaries; and the man who became one of the great officers lived in the style of a prince, ruling over dozens of extensive estates, having an income exceeding that of most barons, taking precedence at the court as an ecclesiastic and respected in the councils of the Church as a leader of warriors.

Until the latest stages of its history, the Temple was a very exclusive organisation, and membership was an honour not to be obtained easily. The simple tests originally imposed upon aspirants to membership of the brotherhood had been superseded by a stringent cross-examination. The potential Knight Templar attended before the chapter, which was held secretly at night in a preceptory always carefully guarded against interlopers. He must give proof that his father was of knightly caste and that he himself had been born in wedlock. Illegitimate knights were barred from membership of the Order, apparently not because of any objection to illegitimacy but because of the danger that a prince might try

to gain control of the Temple by having an illegitimate son introduced into it.

Everything was done three times. The candidate was asked three times if he wished to enter the Order and had to beg thrice for food—the food he asked was bread and water to indicate the humble nature of his demands from the institution. The procedure to be followed in the reception of recruits into the Order was explained in great detail and the exact wording was provided in the Rule for both Receiver and candidate. When the chapter was assembled and the proposal to examine the recruit had been made and agreed by the brethren, the Receiver was to address these words to the chapter: “The majority of you have agreed to take this man into the brotherhood. If any among you knows of anything concerning him which makes him ineligible according to the Rule, let him say so; for it is better that such should be said now than when he is brought before us”. Provided no objection was raised, the candidate was taken to a room near the chamber where the chapter was in session, and two or three of the oldest and best knights of the preceptory were instructed to examine him. “And when he is before them, they must say, ‘Brother, do you wish to enter into our brotherhood?’ And if he says, ‘Yes’, they must explain the hardships of the Order and the strictness of its regulations. And if he says that he will gladly suffer everything for God and that he wishes to be the serf and slave of the Order henceforth during all the days of his life, they are to ask him if he is married or affianced; if he has ever vowed himself or promised himself to another Order; if he owes anything to any man which he cannot pay and if he is healthy, has any hidden disease, and if he is any man’s vassal.

“And if he says ‘No’, and that he is free of all such embarrassments, the brothers should return to the chapter and say to the Master or his deputy, ‘We have spoken to the applicant who is outside and to the extent of our knowledge

and ability have explained the hardships of the Order. And he says that he wishes to be the slave and serf of the Order and that in regard to all the things on which we have questioned him he is free and unfettered and that nothing prevents him from accepting the duties and responsibilities of a brother, if it pleases God, you, and the brethren.'

"And the Master shall then say that if anyone knows anything to the contrary it should be said now rather than afterwards. And if no one speaks, then he must say, 'Is it the wish of all of you that, in God's name, he should be brought before us?' And the brethren shall say, 'In God's name let him be brought before us'. And then those who have examined him (the recruit) must go back to him and say, 'Are you still of the same mind?' And if he says, 'Yes', they must explain how he is to conduct himself before the brotherhood; teach him how to act before the chapter, to kneel before the presiding brother and keep his hands folded, saying, 'Sir, I come before God, before you, and before the brethren, and I pray you, for the love of God and our Lady Mary, to let me share in the brotherhood and deeds of the Order; and all the days of my life I shall be the servant and slave of the Order'.

"And he who presides over the chapter shall say, 'Dear brother, you ask a great thing, for you see only the outward trappings of the Order. You see only that we have good horses and rich equipment and eat and drink well and have fine clothing, and so you may imagine that life with us will be very pleasant. But the hard regulations which govern the Order are hidden from you. You who are your own master will find it very difficult when you have to be the servant of others. You will be unable to follow your own will. When you wish to be in this country, you will be sent overseas, or if you wish to be in Acre, you will be sent to Tripoli, or Antioch, or Armenia, or you will be sent to Apulia, or Sicily, or Lombardy, or France, or Burgundy, or England or some of

the other places where we have possessions. And if you wish to sleep, you will be made to keep guard; and if you wish to watch, you will be sent to bed; when you want to eat, then you will be required to do something else'."

The candidate replied that he would suffer all things for the love of God, confirmed that he was a knight and eligible for acceptance, that his health was sound, that he had no obligations to any other Order, and was free of debt. The Receiver then said, "Do you swear to God and our Lady Mary that you will all the days of your life obey the Master of the Temple and any other placed in authority over you?"

"And he (the candidate) must say, 'Yes, sir, if God pleases'."

"Do you swear to God and our Lady Mary that you will live in chastity all the days of your life?"

"And he must say, 'Yes, sir, if God pleases'."

"Do you swear to God and our Lady Mary that you will all the days of your life live without personal property?"

"And he must say, 'Yes, sir, if God pleases'."

"Do you swear to God and our Lady Mary that during all the days of your life you will, with the strength and power given you by God, fight for the Holy Land of Jerusalem and assist in holding and protecting the possessions of the Christians to the best of your ability?"

"And he must say, 'Yes, sir, if God pleases'."

"Do you promise to God and our Lady Mary that you will not permit a Christian to be treated unjustly and unlawfully despoiled of his heritage in your presence and never, by word or deed, support such a deed?"

"And he must say, 'Yes, sir, if God pleases'."

"Then in the name of God and our Lady Mary and St. Peter of Rome and our father the Pope and in the name of all the brethren of the Temple, we accept you, your father, your mother, and all your family whom you wish to participate therein to share the good works which have been done

by the Order from its foundation and shall be done to the end; and you accept us to share in all the good works which you have done or shall do. And we promise you bread and water, and the poor mantle of the Order and much hardship and work'.

"And then he who presides over the chapter must take the mantle and put it round his (the candidate's) neck and tie the cords. And the chaplain shall say the psalm, *Ecce quam bonum*, and the orison of the Holy Ghost, and each brother shall say a pater noster. And he who receives the brother shall then raise him and kiss him on the mouth; and it is usual also for the chaplain to kiss him".

A discourse was thereafter delivered by the Receiver, and the candidate was reminded of some of the more common requirements of the Temple and warned of the severe penalties for infringements of the Rule. He was told that he must never kiss his mother, his sister, his aunt, or any other woman; that he must be strict in attending divine service, must not act as a god-father or hold a child at baptism, must keep a careful watch on his tongue and preserve silence at meals; must sleep partially dressed and be ready for instant service by day or night. He must not expect honours and wealth and the control of wide lands. All the Order held out was the opportunity to flee from the sins of the world, to be the servant of God, to live in poverty, and do penance.

CHAPTER X

THE KHORASMIANS

THE Temple of the East and the Temple of the West were inseparably bound up with each other. Nothing that affected one part of the Order could fail to have its reaction upon the other, but the actions of the Templars in Europe had little direct influence upon the Temple in Asia, whereas any failure of the brethren in the Holy Land reverberated throughout Christendom. After the defeat of the Fifth Crusade, strong criticisms were made against the Temple in Europe as well as in the East. The Order had performed many outstanding exploits in the expedition, but the responsibility for the failure was laid upon the Templars and the Hospitallers. Cardinal Pelagius, whatever his own feelings, could not have refused the terms offered at Mansourah by the Sultan if he had not been supported by the military Orders. Had these terms been accepted most of the Holy Land would have been in the possession of the Christians.

Part of the abuse was, however, reserved for the Emperor Frederick. It was believed that had he kept his vow to lead an army to Egypt, Cairo would have fallen, and Frederick was condemned by most of Christendom for his long inaction. The Emperor repeated his willingness to engage in the holy war, and undertook to sail with an army in the autumn of 1227 and to remain in the East for two years unless the Holy Land had been captured before that time. The Emperor did indeed leave Europe with his army (September, 1227), but though his followers sailed to Acre, Frederick turned back after three days at sea. He pleaded illness as

the reason for his return, but the Pope (Gregory IX) would accept no excuse and the ban of excommunication was launched against the Emperor.

Frederick was not a religious man, but the anathema of the Church interfered with his political ambitions. What weighed even more with him, however, was the criticism of the princes. He was held up to contempt as a man who had deserted his army and basely turned away from the holy war to enjoy the luxuries of his court; and the Emperor realised that his prestige could be restored only if he resumed his interrupted Crusade. There were obstacles in his way. The Holy See had a year before been in favour of the expedition. As Frederick was now banned by the Pope, however, the Church frowned upon everything that he proposed. The Emperor appealed for the sentence to be cancelled, but he had expelled the Pope from Rome and had fought so bitterly against the ecclesiastics that the appeal was rejected. Frederick was resolved that he would sail to the Holy Land, and Gregory was equally resolved that the Emperor should not take part in the holy war. Crusades were the affair of the Church, and in the opinion of the Pope it was scandalous that an excommunicated man should dare to fight for the cross. The Church wished to see the Holy City restored to Christendom, but only by an army of Crusaders vowed to the Church and under the leadership of a man who admitted the Pope to be supreme in everything that related to Crusading expeditions.

When therefore Frederick announced his intention of sailing for the East in the summer of 1228, the Church forbade all Christians, under pain of excommunication, to take service with the Emperor. Sermons were ordered to be preached against him throughout Christendom; the priests were commanded to dissuade everyone from enlisting for the expedition; and the Church which had so often besought men to take part in the holy war, threw its weight against this

Crusade! Frederick, however, could not be stopped, and he set out from Brindisi for Palestine in August, though with a force of no more than six hundred knights. At Acre, which was reached on September 7th, he found only part of the army which he had despatched in the previous year, for a number of his soldiers had gone back to Europe on learning that their Emperor had deserted. His arrival was the signal for great rejoicing and he was soon in command of an army of fifty thousand men. The acclamation did not last long. Gregory had sent his emissaries to the Holy Land, commanding that no assistance whatsoever should be given to the impious Emperor, and Gerold, Patriarch of Jerusalem, laid under interdict every town which Frederick entered. The Temple and the Hospital were specially enjoined not to lend their aid to Frederick, and they informed the Emperor that they could take no part in the Crusade. He was left with his own army and the Teutonic Knights, and his force shrank to less than thirty thousand men.

Although faced with such opposition, Frederick refused to abandon the Crusade. He marched to Jaffa, and the Temple and the Hospital hastily consulted on the attitude to adopt. They could not ignore the command of the Church to which they were under vows, but on the other hand they dared not allow Frederick to fight alone. It was their duty to face the Moslems. Apart from that consideration, they feared that Frederick might gain the Holy City, and they would not risk the disgrace which would fall upon them if the Crusade took Jerusalem in their absence. A compromise was reached. The Templars and Hospitallers would fight the infidel, but not under Frederick's banner. When therefore the Emperor left Acre, the Templars and Hospitallers marched along the same route but under their own leaders. They claimed that they were not disobeying the Pope, but were a separate army which had no connection with Frederick.

The arrangement proved unworkable. It gave the Moslems the opportunity to attack each army separately, and another solution had to be found. This time the compromise was even more meaningless. The Templars and the Hospitallers would march and fight with Frederick's army, but the Emperor must not presume to command them in his own name, for that was the name of an excommunicated man. He must command in the name of God and Christendom. Thus were the scruples of the two military Orders satisfied, and the Temple and the Hospital, vowed to the Church, served under the leader whom the Pope had laid under the anathema.

Frederick believed that he would regain the Holy City without much effort. El Kamel of Egypt was jealous of his brother, Corradin, Prince of Damascus, and had promised to cede Jerusalem in return for Frederick's aid against Damascus. Since this agreement was reached, however, Corradin had died and El Kamel withdrew from the negotiations; but Frederick was sure that the negotiations would be resumed and he waited patiently. At Jaffa, which had been reached without difficulty, one of the Sultan's nephews proposed to enter into an alliance with the Emperor against El Kamel, and several other Moslem princes also were anxious to attack the Sultan. El Kamel was afraid that Frederick might support one of these rebels, and the Emperor made the most of his advantage. After protracted discussions, the Sultan was induced to surrender Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Jaffa and all Jerusalem, with the exception of the Temple and the Mosque of Omar. In return, Frederick undertook not to attack Egypt for ten years and to use his best endeavours to prevent any other monarch from disturbing El Kamel's possessions. It was a remarkable triumph for Frederick who, despite the opposition of the Church, achieved more by this treaty of February 20th, 1229, than the Crusades of a century. "See how God's

blessing goeth with the Pope's curses ", Fuller remarks triumphantly.

Frederick had come to the East, not only to gain the Holy City but to have himself crowned as King of Jerusalem. John of Brienne, titular king, had in 1223 made a proposal which received the approval of the Church and the Emperor. His daughter, Isabella, was the heiress to the throne, and it was suggested that Frederick should marry her and thus have an interest in the fate of the kingdom. The Emperor married Isabella, but she died before the treaty with El Kamel had been negotiated, and Frederick had therefore no title to the throne. Moreover, John of Brienne was still alive (and was to play several parts, including that of the Emperor of Constantinople, before his death); and he protested that he had not surrendered the crown. Frederick brushed all arguments aside. On March 18th, 1229, he marched into Jerusalem and at once made arrangements for his coronation.

The Holy City had been lost to Christendom for forty years, but there was little satisfaction in the East at its recovery by Frederick. The Patriarch Gerold cursed the conqueror, and two priests dogged the Emperor's steps warning all men to avoid the excommunicate. The decree had been that every town which Frederick entered should be laid under interdict and Jerusalem was not excluded. So the Holy City itself was declared to be under the ban! When Frederick came into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on the second day (Sunday) after his arrival, the church was packed with his soldiers, but no bells rang in the city, no priest was present, all the sacred vessels had been removed, and all the statues hidden from the gaze of the impious victor. Frederick was contemptuous. He had come to be crowned as King of Jerusalem, and he needed no other audience than that provided by the Teutonic Knights and his own soldiers. A gold crown had been placed on the high altar, and, as no

priest would perform the ceremony, the Emperor crowned himself.

He had long been a danger to the pretensions of the Holy See, and his possession of Jerusalem made him a greater menace than before. As soldiers of the Church, the military Orders were expected to hate the Emperor, but the Temple and the Hospital had also other reasons for antagonism towards him. They had demanded and received recruits and money for the purpose of regaining Jerusalem, and their struggle had been in vain. Now Frederick, with the greatest of ease, had obtained the prize so long denied to them. His success seemed to show them up as bunglers and might threaten their very existence. The Templars and the Hospitallers felt that Frederick had slighted them. They were accustomed to have their words treated with respect by the leaders of a Crusade, but the Emperor had refused to listen to their advice.

The Templars were especially bitter. When they heard that El Kamel would not surrender the Temple of Jerusalem, they insisted that no treaty would be acceptable to them which did not make provision for its restoration. Frederick, however, brushed such protests aside. He would have liked to hold all Jerusalem, but he was not seriously concerned that El Kamel wanted to retain the Temple. Certainly he would not risk war over a building which meant little to him, and the laments of the Templars were ignored. The anger of the brethren mounted when the Emperor crowned himself as King of Jerusalem. The Order had nominated kings more than once; and for half a century it had at least always been consulted and had played an important part in the coronation ceremony. Frederick cared nothing for what the Templars claimed as their rights. He did not disguise his irritation that the Temple had refused to obey commands issued in his name, and he made it plain that to the Teutonic Knights, who alone of the military

Orders had supported him unconditionally, would be reserved all the benefits that he could bestow in Palestine.

So long as the throne of Jerusalem was held by a German Emperor with such intentions, the Templars were in danger of being overshadowed. Theirs had been the leading Order, but that leadership might be threatened by the new administration. Not only had Frederick promised to cherish the Teutonic Knights, but these Knights were principally recruited in the Empire and would naturally be favoured by the imperial officers. The Templars were determined to avoid the risk of losing their supremacy in the East. They could not fight Frederick, but they hoped to remove him by treachery. A letter was despatched to El Kamel, informing him that the Emperor proposed to visit the place in the Jordan Valley where Christ was believed to have been baptised, and suggesting that it would be an opportunity to assassinate Frederick. The Templars thought that the Sultan would welcome the chance to seize or kill the man to whom he had ceded so much, but El Kamel was not deeply interested in Jerusalem and he had a real admiration for his rival. He sent the Templars' letter to the Emperor. Frederick denounced the Order. He claimed that its fortresses should be given into his hands, and, when this demand was refused, led his army against Castle Pilgrim. Frederick had to leave the Holy Land before he could avenge himself on his betrayers, but one of his first actions on reaching Apulia was to command all the lands of the Temple to be seized and the brethren to be evicted from the province.

Frederick remained in Palestine only for six weeks after his coronation. He had apparently thought that, having been excommunicated for failing to fight for the recovery of Jerusalem, the Church would lift the ban as soon as he won the Holy City; but the Pope could not forgive him. Far from lifting the ban, the Church took another step

against Frederick—it proclaimed a Crusade against him. With John of Brienne at its head, an army of men bearing the sign of the Cross and calling themselves Crusaders began to ravage the Emperor's lands in Italy. The Pope had summoned all Christendom to enlist in his new holy war, but he put his faith mainly in the military Orders, and the Temple and the Hospital answered his summons. While Templars in the Holy Land were betraying Frederick to the Sultan of Egypt, Templars in Europe were laying waste the Emperor's Italian Empire.

In Palestine, Richard Filangieri, Marshal of the Empire, served as Frederick's governor, and had the support of the Teutonic Knights. They had expected to gain considerably from their co-operation with the Empire and they did so, though the fear of the Temple that it would be quite overshadowed proved groundless. Filangieri had little support other than that of the Teutonic Knights. He was opposed by most of the leading nobles as well as the Temple and the Hospital. The King of Jerusalem had always ruled with the advice of a council of the lords, and these lords claimed that they must be consulted even when the Emperor was titular king. Frederick despised the traditions and customs of the kingdom, and felt that to allow the barons a share in the government of the country would be weakness. The lords pointed out that the King of Jerusalem must, by custom, reside in the kingdom or else appoint a regent. The Emperor had no thought of taking up residence in the East nor would he raise anyone to the regency. He ordered Filangieri to over-ride all resistance, but the Marshal, though willing to obey, could not do much in a country where the opposition was so powerful and his own forces so weak.

Aggression on the part of the Moslems prevented matters from reaching a crisis. Frederick had signed a truce of ten years with El Kamel, but in less than twelve months attacks

were being made on the Christians. Although the attacks were on a small scale, they served to divert the attention of the Christians from the question of government. El Kamel was not responsible for the breaches of the treaty. The attacks were made without his authority by the Moslems of ceded territories. They refused to accept the Christian dominion, and, organised in armed bands, they swept down on pilgrims on the way from the coast to Jerusalem. On one occasion ten thousand Christians were trapped and slaughtered by these marauders. At the same time the Prince of Damascus invaded the Christian lands. The succession of minor engagements was a constant drain on the military Orders. In 1237 the Templars in Antioch, led by the Preceptor, were taken unawares by a Moslem army. "In the battle fell more than a hundred knights of the Temple and three hundred crossbowmen, apart from a large number of seculars and many foot soldiers." The chronicler goes on to relate that three thousand Turks were killed by the Christians, but the Moslems had a host from which new troops could be raised whereas a hundred knights represented more than half the total of the Knights Templars in Antioch.

So long as the treaty with Egypt was in force, the Franks lost little land, but almost immediately the truce expired in 1239 the Egyptians invaded the Latin kingdom. A great army ruthlessly pushed back the Christians, who were forced to surrender Jerusalem and several other places. El Kamel had, however, died shortly before, and when the usual quarrels about succession broke out among the Saracens, the Franks were able to regain part of the lost territory, though they failed to recover Jerusalem.

The recapture of the Holy City had seemed certain, for, during the struggle between the claimants to El Kamel's empire, a new Crusade arrived from the West. These Crusaders had left Europe despite the prohibition both of the Pope and the Emperor Frederick. The Holy See forbade

any pilgrims to sail to the Holy Land and issued orders that they were to be given no assistance, and Frederick had taken up the same attitude but for different reasons. The Pope and the Emperor were in dispute again. Frederick was describing the Pope as a madman who polluted the sanctuary of the Church and was like to a roaring lion in his madness, while the Pope described Frederick as a beast arisen from the sea, full of blasphemy, with the claws of a bear, the mouth of a lion, and otherwise like a panther, a beast who blasphemed against God's name and the saints in heaven. The Emperor would not consent to a new Crusade because he himself wanted to lead another expedition to the East as soon as he had settled his quarrel with the Church; the Pope refused to countenance a new Crusade because he felt that the faithful would be much better employed in fighting Frederick.

Both Pope and Emperor were ignored, and the new Crusade, under Theobald of Champagne, landed in Palestine (August, 1239), and invited the Franks to co-operate in an attempt to regain the Holy City. The imperial party would not risk the anger of the Emperor by supporting the expedition, but the Templars, the Hospitallers, and a number of the lords joined Theobald. The Crusaders went to Jaffa and proposed to press on to Gaza when preparations had been made for an advance. Part of the army would not wait and several thousand Crusaders marched out from Jaffa at the beginning of November. As the Christians passed through a narrow valley, the Moslems appeared in force on the heights, and as the Crusaders thought it dishonourable to retreat before the pagan, almost the whole Christian force was killed or captured.

This disaster was in effect the end of Theobald's Crusade, but there still remained a chance of winning something by negotiation. Damascus and Egypt were at war, and while the Christian army was small, it might turn the scales if thrown on one side or the other. Theobald entered into

discussions with both. Egypt offered to cede most of the Holy Land which it still possessed if the Crusaders would help in the war against Damascus; Damascus for its part promised the return of certain lands which it had captured from the Franks and promised to conquer Jerusalem for the Christians. The Hospitallers pressed for the acceptance of Egypt's offer on the ground that Egypt was the stronger and already possessed Jerusalem. But if the Hospital approved one course, the Temple would usually take the direct opposite. The Grand Master of the Temple (Herman de Perigord) therefore came out strongly on behalf of Damascus. Theobald of Champagne himself favoured Egypt and entered into a treaty with the Sultan in September, 1240. The Templars refused to acknowledge it and they negotiated their own treaty with Damascus.

The West had in the meantime sent another champion—Richard of Cornwall, brother of Henry III. Richard and his English Crusaders had also come against the wish of the Pope. The Church had preached the Crusade in England, but the Holy See had decided that those who took the Cross would help the Church more if, instead of going to the Holy Land, they contributed to the papal treasury. The Pope despatched his emissary, a Templar, with power to absolve Crusaders from their vow if they paid for the privilege. Nor was it optional. Those who had assumed the cross were commanded by the Church to buy freedom from performing the vow which the Church had commanded them to take!

As soon as Richard reached Acre (October 11th, 1240) he was besieged by the envoys of the Egyptians and Damascenes, who pointed to the treaties made respectively by Theobald and the Temple. Richard refused to acknowledge either undertaking until he had the opportunity to consider the advantages which the claimants could offer. He was convinced, however, that the most favourable terms could be obtained from Egypt, and by an agreement in May, 1241, the

Richard of Cornwall; and Matthew Paris repeats the charge, accusing the Templars of "waging an unjust and unseemly war" against Ayoub. Frederick had never forgotten the Order for its opposition, its refusal to admit him to Castle Pilgrim and other strongholds, and its treachery. He accused the Templars of "waxing wanton" and entertaining "Moslem princes and their followers with great pomp within the gates of the Temple". More serious still, he claimed that the Templars allowed the Moslem visitors "to celebrate secular plays and to perform their iniquitous rites with invocations of Mahomet".

The Khorasmians under Barbacan consisted of some twenty thousand horsemen, but so great was the fear inspired by these savages that garrisons fled at their approach and town after town fell to them without any attempt at defence being made. The Khorasmians were believed to drink the blood of prisoners, inflict terrible tortures on the wounded and mutilate the dead, and whole areas were depopulated by the terror-stricken people when the savages were reported to be in the vicinity. Jerusalem was besieged in the middle of July, and abandoned by the Franks six weeks later. Those Christians who could escape from the city did so; the rest of the inhabitants, afraid even to look upon the enemy, shut themselves up in their houses. The Khorasmians rode into the undefended Holy City and their toll of massacre is estimated at twenty thousand.

Reports of these disasters were sent to Europe by the Templars and Hospitallers. "From the regions of the East have emerged ferocious wild beasts who have invaded the province of Jerusalem, which, although previously often harassed by the murderous Saracens, has of late had a measure of peace and prosperity and been at peace with its neighbours", reads one letter. "But through the sins of the Christians there has arisen an unknown people who wield the sword of the avenger. The rage and fury of the Tartars

have shaken the whole of the East with their terrors. They persecute all, making no distinction between the Christians and the infidels." The nobles of the Holy Land and the leaders of the military Orders were summoned and it was decided to collect every available man in the kingdom and risk all on a battle with the Khorasmians. Walter of Jaffa was given the command, and six thousand Christian knights flocked to his banner. As the Khorasmians were the allies of the Sultan, the Moslem princes of Damascus and Kerak, at that time at war with Egypt, were asked to combine with the Christian army. They agreed to co-operate, but their contribution did not comprise more than five thousand men.

The combined army gathered at Cæsarea, where it was hoped to meet the Khorasmians, but Barbacan, uncertain of the issue of an engagement against so large a force, retired to Gaza. Egypt sent troops to his aid, and on October 17th, 1244, the battle was joined. On the left were the Hospitallers, in the centre the Templars, who guarded the true cross carried by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and on the right were the Moslems of Kerak and Damascus. The struggle raged for two days and ended in an overwhelming victory for the Khorasmians. The Moslem auxiliaries deserted the Christians early in the conflict, and the main burden was borne by the Templars, the Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. "They resisted courageously like doughty champions of the Lord and virtuous defenders of the faith; but their numbers were small against so tremendous a host and at last they must admit defeat. . . . Out of all the brethren of the Temple, of the Hospital of St. John, and of the Teutonic Knights of St. Mary, only thirty-three Templars, twenty-six Hospitallers, and three of the Teutonic brethren escaped, the rest being slain or captured." More than thirty thousand men are said to have died in the battle of Gaza.

CHAPTER XI

THE LATER RULE OF THE TEMPLE

AFTER the debacle at Gaza, letters again poured into Europe from the Christians in the East. The writers repeated that the Franks had neither the leaders, the men, nor the money to resist the savage invader and that a new Crusade must be organised. In the summer of 1245, the Pope (Innocent IV) called a council of the Church at Lyons. Emissaries were present to plead the cause of the ruined Latin kingdom, but the Emperor of Constantinople, Baldwin II, came in person to urge the Pope to raise an army to preserve the dynasty in Byzantium. And there were also troubles nearer home for the papacy. Frederick II still defied the Church, and the Pope was determined to crush him utterly. Innocent could not refuse to call upon the West to throw itself against the Khorasmians, but neither could he refuse to proclaim a Crusade on behalf of Baldwin II, and he had no intention of forgiving the Emperor. So against Frederick, too, a Crusade was launched. Potential Crusaders had thus their choice of three expeditions; and the Pope made it clear that the humiliation of Frederick was the most necessary task. Comparatively few Westerners therefore turned to the Holy Land.

The military Orders, however, did not depend on the Pope. Every branch of the Temple, the Hospital and the Teutonic Order was commanded and begged to send all available men and to recruit as many new members as possible for service against the Khorasmians. From the preceptories and commanderies of the West, knights and commoners were sent in large numbers in response to these appeals, and within a year

the Orders were almost restored to their former strength in Palestine.

The capture of every part of the Holy Land by the Khorasmians had at one time seemed inevitable, but the invaders, like the Franks, exhausted themselves at Gaza. With their reinforcements from Europe, the military Orders were able to withstand the further attacks of the savages, and even to regain a part of the lost territory. The Khorasmians had no reservoir on which to draw for additional men to replace their losses. The friendship with Egypt had not lasted long, and in 1247 the former allies met in two great battles. The Egyptian army won both battles decisively, and the Khorasmians were annihilated almost to a man.

Although the Khorasmian menace was thus removed, Egypt, which now held the Holy City, remained a danger, and the military Orders, who alone among the Christians could put any appreciable disciplined body in the field, could not hope to conquer so powerful an enemy. Such an achievement was possible only to an army from the West, and no such army appeared in Palestine. For a century and a half Christendom had sent its expeditions to the aid of the Franks, but interest had dwindled ever since the great movement which led to the First Crusade in 1096. Influential Popes, powerful kings or emperors, enthusiastic nobles, fanatical preachers had from time to time been able to enlist large armies for the holy war, but with each succeeding generation the West showed less desire to take part in the struggle for the Holy Land. The flow of pilgrims was always considerable, but to recruit an expedition for war in the East grew ever more difficult, even when comparative peace reigned in Europe and the whole strength of the Church supported a Crusade. When the Holy See felt that other things were more important than the struggle against Islam or when the great princes were at war, the cause of the Holy Land was practically ignored.

Christendom had at first been glad to see the military Orders grow in wealth and numbers. Though the people lost the desire to fight the infidel, they still set great store on the possession of Jerusalem and gave their warmest approbation to organisations vowed to carry on the war against Islam. When the Christian territory in the Holy Land began to shrink, the provision of further men and more money for the Orders was for a time generally approved, but Christendom gave freely to the Temple and the Hospital only because it confidently expected that the Moslems would be crushed for ever. Repeated demands by the military Orders were bound to cause criticism, especially when the Temple and the Hospital flaunted their wealth in Europe and had non-combatant members everywhere. Matthew Paris, writing of the year 1244, says that the Temple could easily have raised nine thousand soldiers from its houses outside the Holy Land and equipped them for war at the expense of the Order. And, he points out, as the Temple had so many men, some of them ranking among the best knights in Christendom, people began to wonder why reverses in the East were so frequent. The West had little knowledge of the situation of the Franks, and failed to realise that brilliant successes were possible only when the infidels were divided, and that it was hopeless to expect the Orders to withstand the assault of a united Islam or even of a single one of the strong Moslem princes. Matthew Paris, for instance, was convinced that the Temple could have defeated the whole of Islam "if there had not been treachery and fraud".

The loss of territory in the Holy Land and the luxury and arrogance shown in Europe by members of the Order were in themselves sufficient to cause criticism of the Temple, but there was another reason for complaint. The early history of the Temple is a record of war and war alone, and Christendom looked to the Temple to maintain a perpetual

struggle and serve as the advance guard of the Christian forces. The Order, however, had adopted commercial and financial functions in every country. Any activity other than war would have been condemned in the Temple, but the condemnation became severe when Christendom began to believe that the brethren sacrificed the struggle against Islam for the sake of trade and wealth, and that the reverses in the East were due to indolence and cowardice.

In the early years, the Templars had little to lose except their lives, and they had looked upon the war against the infidel as a means of winning spoil and territory for their Order as well as a duty. The wild ideas of the wickedness of the Moslems and the determination to exterminate the infidel for the glory of God were doomed to pass, but, long after the Templars were fraternising with the enemy, the lure of conquest remained strong. When, however, the Order became rich and acquired vast properties, the rewards of victory dwindled in the eyes of the brethren. Moreover, conquest grew more difficult. Moslem armies had once melted away at the approach of the Franks, but the belief in the invincibility of the Westerners had been exploded even before the beginning of the Second Crusade.

The Temple retained its desire for offensive measures many years after the other settlers in the East wished to limit military operations to defensive measures. The aggressiveness of the brethren was a source of irritation to the nobles, and the criticism was frequently made that the Templars endangered the country in their eagerness for fighting and spoil. Though the Temple had never lacked money except in its first decade, great possessions did not come to it until the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century. The discipline had been severe while the Order was fighting for its existence, but abuses were difficult to resist when the Temple had riches and land and when the need to win fresh territory by the sword had

passed. The positions of authority became more numerous as well as more influential. A Templar might rule the properties previously possessed by two or more nobles who had ranked high in Syria, and the temptation to live as their predecessors had lived was very strong. The example given by the leaders was followed by the simple knights and the commoners. The Order might not officially approve display, but nevertheless it often encouraged the practice. The importance of an organisation tended to be judged by the benefits that it could confer upon its members, and in later years the Temple had several reasons for wishing to foster a high opinion of its importance. Recruits were attracted by a brotherhood which flaunted its power, and the Temple was determined to outshine the Hospital, in which the same influences were at work.

Wealth was not the only explanation of the arrogance which was shown by the Order in general. The Templars had the contempt of the professional for the amateur. The feudal army of the king was an inefficient military machine compared with the disciplined brethren, and the Temple and the Hospital did not disguise their opinion of the royal troops. Without the aid of the Orders, the kingdom would have collapsed more than once, and the brethren felt themselves entitled to demand homage from the people whom they had protected. Even when the king or one of the Christian princes arranged a treaty, it was common in the thirteenth century for the Temple and the Hospital to be asked by the Moslems to give it their sanction. The reason, says a chronicler, is that the Moslems knew they could trust the military Orders to see that such a treaty was then respected by the Franks; but another chronicler suggests that it was because neither the Temple nor the Hospital regarded itself as bound by an agreement to which its approval had not expressly been given. Sometimes the Orders made their own treaties without consultation with the ruler. An

Emperor like Frederick II might flout the Temple, but rarely would any King of Jerusalem engage in war without the support of one or other of the military Orders. The Temple had its own navy at Tyre and Acre, as well as its garrisons in most parts of the Christian possessions, and it had the financial resources which the kingdom so often lacked. Everything combined to feed the pride of the Temple and the Hospital in the East—the Teutonic Knights never achieved the position of the two older-established institutions. Christians and Moslems alike acknowledged the power of the fighting monks.

The charges made against the Templars were not only that the members of the Order lived in a luxurious and extravagant manner inconsistent with their vows, or that they exhibited a pride and arrogance at variance with what was expected of soldiers of Christ, but that they had grown tepid in war. Almost anything might have been excused if the Templars had maintained the fight against the Moslem with the vigour and fanaticism of their forerunners. Only on two or three occasions in all their history did the brethren show cowardice in the face of the enemy or a lack of endurance in a campaign, though sometimes their direction of military expeditions was reprehensible. It was admitted that when the Templars fought their skill and courage were unsurpassed; but the criticism was that the Order did not fight often enough and that it sought to avert wars instead of making them.

It was undeniable that the Temple in the thirteenth century frequently threw its influence on the side of peace. In the occupation of the Holy Land, the Franks had at first been in the ascendant and had then more often been the attacker than the attacked. With the rise of Saladin, however, the Christians had been on the defensive. After his death, the advantage had for a time been with the Christians again, but the balance had after a few years decisively turned

in favour of the Moslems. There had been long periods of comparative peace, and these would have been more numerous and of greater duration in the twelfth century had it not been for the Temple and the Hospital. But at that time war was the principal reason for the existence of the military Orders and their main source of support.

The tendency to favour peace did not show itself distinctly in the Temple until the final stages of the Latin occupation. It was a tendency not confined to the Templars. The Hospital, the Teutonic Order, and most of the Franks learned from experience that the kingdom lacked the men to defend what the Latins still possessed, and that a footing could be retained in the East only by making terms with the Moslems. The West, however, did not understand. Armies such as Islam could put in the field were almost unknown in Europe, and Christendom continued to talk of the Moslems as if their forces were no larger than those of the petty barons of the West. If the Franks made a treaty with Islam, therefore, it could only be because of cowardice or indifference or greed, and Europe was especially bitter towards the Temple which was so frequently in the forefront of the negotiations.

The desire which had spread among the brethren to enjoy the pleasures open to the members of a rich and powerful Order, and the disinclination to exchange these pleasures for the discomforts and danger of the battlefield had relatively little effect upon the official attitude of the Temple until the successes of the infidel made effective war impossible to the Franks. The importance of the Holy War to Moslems and Christians and the generations of antagonism between them made any real and lasting peace impracticable. Moslems who had lived for years beside the Franks might be willing to show tolerance, but fiery infidels who came in contact with the Christians for the first time were eager to expel the invader. On the Christian side, the position was

similar. Bands of Christians sailed to the East imbued with the fanatical spirit of the First Crusaders, and threw themselves against the traditional foe. Clashes between the hot-heads frequently led to serious engagements in which all treaties were forgotten. Seldom had either the Moslems or the Christians any strong central government able to impose a policy and ensure that it was carried out. Even in the Temple there were always differing policies. While no leader was independent, the great officers had wide powers and sometimes pursued a policy entirely opposed to that of the Grand Master and the chapter. Retribution would fall upon those who defied the Order, but the machinery worked slowly, and months might elapse before a rebel could be forced to capitulate or removed from his office.

The Rule given to Hugh de Payens after the Council of Troyes in 1128 had been revised and amplified as the Temple developed, and some of the additions were made within a few years of the extinction of the Order. The early Rule consists only of seventy-two paragraphs, but the complete Rule is ten times as long and lays down in great detail the duties, powers and privileges of the various dignitaries, the method of government, the punishments for different offences and so on.

The Grand Master ranked as a prince at royal courts; in the council of the Church he took precedence of the ambassadors and peers and sat with the bishops. His chief officers were the Seneschal, who was deputy Grand Master; the Marshal, who had charge of the horses and equipment of the brethren and took control in the absence of the Grand Master and the Seneschal. The commander of the land and realm of Jerusalem had the wealth of the Order in his care, looked after the houses of the organisation and their provisioning, and was also admiral of the fleet. The commander of the city of Jerusalem was responsible for the charitable work of the Order in Jerusalem and provided for

the defence as well as the feeding of the pilgrims; ten knights were attached to him for the protection of pilgrims, and these knights were also charged with the custody of the true cross. The Drapier looked after the clothing of the brethren and ranked next in importance.

The power of the Grand Master had in theory not increased much since the Council of Troyes. Although the supreme leader of the Order he must rule with the advice of the chapter and bow to the will of the majority. He could not make any important decisions without its authority nor could he modify any of its decrees. He must consult the chapter before declaring war or concluding peace or ordering an attack upon a strong fortress. He must seek its authority before he lent money, sold any lands belonging to the Temple, or engaged in any considerable financial operations. Minor offices were within his gift in his own province of Jerusalem, but the principal posts could be filled only by the chapter. Like the other leaders, the Grand Master must command in the name of the Temple or the Pope, never in any circumstances as the servant of a secular prince.

In practice, however, the Grand Master was almost unfettered in the internal administration of the Temple. As it was impossible to hold general councils frequently, the Grand Master took decisions on his own responsibility which, according to the Rule, should have been the subject of deliberation by the chapter. Even when a general chapter was held, the Grand Master need not fear defeat. Certain officers attended by right and could not be excluded under the Rule, and these might be antagonistic. But the Grand Master could pack the chapter. He was empowered to summon ordinary knights whom he chose to regard as worthy to give advice, and there was no limitation to the number of such nominees.

Four horses were allowed for the use of the Grand Master; he had his own chaplain with three horses, a sergeant

with two horses, a squire with one horse, and a secretary. He was attended by two knights, who must be of considerable rank in the Order, and he was always accompanied by a troop of Turcoples. In war, this personal bodyguard was increased and its duty was to guard the great round tent in which the Grand Master lived while on active service and over which he flew a special flag. His tent was next to the portable chapel which the Templars always carried in their military operations, and around which the tents of the knights—and each knight had at least one tent—were pitched.

On the death of the Grand Master, the Marshal assumed control, and his first step was to summon the clergy of the Order. All present at the funeral of a Grand Master—which was always conducted with much pomp and display—must say two hundred pater nosters for seven days and for the same length of time a hundred poor men must be fed at the expense of the Temple. After the funeral, prayers and fasts were ordered throughout the Order as a preparation for the election of the new Grand Master. The principal officers of the Temple were convoked and an intermediate Grand Commander of the Election chosen. The proceedings opened with prayer, and then the Grand Commander, with the assistance of other leading officers, selected a few candidates—apparently not more than three—from among whom the council chose the Commander of the Election. This Commander could be of any rank, but must be a man who knew the qualifications of the principal leaders, for the new Grand Master could only be selected from among the dignitaries of the Order.

A second brother was chosen to confer with the Commander of the Election and the two spent the night in prayer. Next morning they appeared before the chapter and announced the names of two brothers whom they proposed to invite to join them in their deliberations. The four then chose two more; the six increased their number to eight;

the eight added two again; and the ten completed the panel with a further two brethren. The number of electors was fixed at twelve in imitation of the twelve Apostles, and a priest was selected to represent Jesus Christ. The thirteen retired for discussion, which was confidential and of which no report was given to the chapter. The electors first considered the merits of the leaders in the East, but could choose a leader in the West, if no leader elsewhere met with their approval. When the majority had decided upon a candidate, the thirteen electors returned to the chapter, and the Commander of the Election addressed himself to the successful candidate and hailed him as Grand Master. The chapter would not challenge the selection, nor could the candidate decline the honour. The chosen candidate was escorted in triumph to the church, and, after a service of thanksgiving, the chapter was dissolved. The weakness of the system was that the Commander of the Election could control the nomination. He and the brother chosen to be the second elector selected the further co-electors at will, and were in a position to add to their number brethren whom they knew would support a certain candidate. No limitation was fixed to the right of the first electors to choose the additional members, except that the composition of the secular panel must consist of eight knights and four sergeants from different provinces of the Order.

The later Rule describes the duties and household of the principal officers, and lays down very fully the regulations by which the brethren are to be governed before the world and in their houses, and how they are to be equipped in peace and war. In part the Rule is a military text-book, and it explains how the brethren are to march and fight, giving examples of mistakes made and triumphs won in past engagements. Templars may not engage in private feuds. Their whole duty is to the Temple, and, apart altogether from the risk of injury, the Order could not allow them to waste their

strength. There are numerous instructions about religious exercises, the care of horses, the treatment of sick brethren, and the distribution of charity to the poor. Templars are strictly enjoined to have no money whatsoever in their possession without authority. Brethren who in the course of their duties must handle money and are so authorised are instructed to keep an exact record of all their receipts and disbursements. This is a matter of grave importance, for a brother found after death to have unauthorised money in his possession may not be treated as a member of the Order or receive Christian burial.

The Templars' kit consisted of two shirts, two pairs of pants and tight-fitting breeches, a tunic, a jacket and a cape, two mantles, and a cotton cap. In battle, the brethren wore a hauberk and their legs were protected by chain mail; they had iron shoes, iron shoulder pieces and an iron helm. Over this they wore a surcoat, white for the knights and black for the sergeants. Their weapons were a sword, a lance, a mace and a dagger; they had a large shield, which, like the weapons of offence, must not be painted or decorated in any way. On the march their kit was packed in three bags, and, in addition to weapons and spare clothing, the knight took with him a measuring basin (for barley), two cups and flasks, a bowl, a spoon, a bread knife, cooking cauldron, and two napkins. The bedding consisted of a mattress, two blankets, a sheet, and a heavy cover. The Templars slept in their shirts and pants whether on the field or in the preceptory. The shirt was encircled with a girdle which must always be kept fastened.

The chaplains entered the Order for life or for a fixed period. A priest who chose to devote himself to the Temple for life might become a bishop, and the influence of the Templars was such that the chaplains often obtained exceedingly rapid promotion in the Church. Unlike the brethren, the priests were cleanshaven and wore gloves. They were given special privileges within the Order; their tight-fitting

clothes were made of better material, they ate with the leading officers and were served first, and while the knights used things in common the priests had individual glasses. It was usual to have three sittings at table; the first was for the knights and priests, the others for the sergeants and Turcoples; but a knight who arrived too late for the first sitting ate at the second or third table and was not allowed to make any protest. The strict commandments regarding food laid down by St. Bernard had not long survived, and the brethren fasted only twice a week.

The early Rule had left the punishment of erring brethren to the discretion of the Master, but in the later Rule the penalties for the various offences are specified. Chapters, which all the knights attended, were held weekly in the houses of the Order. The proceedings opened with prayer and ended with a general absolution pronounced by the chaplain. A brother who had offended against the Rule was expected to confess his fault and beg indulgence on his knees. He then withdrew; the other brethren gave their vote in order of rank, and sentence was imposed, if the fault were one with which the chapter was competent to deal, and carried out forthwith. One brother could charge another brother with a fault, but the Rule enjoined that an attempt should first have been made in private to bring the erring brother to a state of repentance before an accusation was launched in the chapter. The penalty for bringing a false charge was very strict, and the chapters were always reluctant to take action against a brother who denied his offence even if there was strong evidence against him.

The severest penalty was expulsion from the Order. Such was the penalty for a member who, since entering the Order, had been guilty of simony, treachery, taking service with the Saracens, heresy, cowardice in battle, unauthorised disclosure of the proceedings of a chapter, or the murder of a Christian. Only provincial chapters could impose this penalty. The

brother condemned to expulsion was stripped of his mantle before the chapter and transferred to another and stricter Order—neither the Temple nor the Hospital would accept the outcasts of each other. (This, however, was not a sign of antagonism, but the result of a working arrangement. Similarly, a Templar who became detached from his fellows in battle was instructed to join the Hospital till the end of the engagement, and the Hospitallers were enjoined to seek the Templars in such circumstances. Bitter as they were towards each other, neither the Temple nor the Hospital broke either agreement.)

A brother who refused to obey a command from his superior, threw off the mantle of the Order even in a moment of anger, kept undesirable company (any woman was, of course, undesirable company for the members), disposed of goods of the Order to a member or an outsider, however innocently, accepted a recruit irregularly into the Order, charged the enemy before the command had been given, or wounded a Christian was punished by exclusion from the companionship of the brethren for a year and a day. The Rule mentions that one brother was given this sentence for failing to account for some butter entrusted to his care!

A Templar found guilty of any of these offences surrendered his horses and arms, wore a white mantle without a cross, ate on the ground, fasted thrice a week, and worked and ranked with the serfs. Any man who underwent such degrading punishment was denied promotion to the higher offices and could not participate in the more important ceremonies of the Order. Serfs ranked with the beasts, and the Temple imposed the same penalty for the slaughter of a serf as for the loss of an animal. Minor infringements of the regulations were punished by condemning the brother to perform menial duties for a few days. Members who, by the provisions of the Rule, should have been expelled from the Order were sometimes given long sentences of imprison-

ment, and there are a few instances of Templars kept in captivity for life by the Order because of their offences.

Except in the graver cases, a chapter had power to mitigate the prescribed sentences. When a brother was found guilty of a charge, his past conduct was taken into account before judgment was given, and on the ground of services rendered to the Order, a popular and valuable member might have the penalty drastically reduced. In certain circumstances, a brother could appeal against the sentence of his local chapter to a superior tribunal of the Temple, but little advantage seems to have been taken of this procedure.

The complete Rule was a very confidential document which few of the brethren ever saw. The simple knight knew only a small number of the regulations; as a brother rose in the hierarchy he was instructed in further sections of the Rule and might have a written copy of some of the paragraphs; but the complete set of statutes for the government of the Temple was confined to the very greatest officers. From time to time, the number of complete copies of the Rule was revised and unnecessary copies were withdrawn and, apparently, destroyed. Everything was done to keep the Rule secret, and one of the most serious offences which a brother could commit was to reveal any part of it. The Rule contains nothing discreditable to the brotherhood and has much that is highly meritorious to the Order; but the Templars loved to surround regulations and ceremonies with mystery, a childish indulgence for which they later paid in frightful tortures.

CHAPTER XII

THE FINAL STRUGGLE

As soon as the Khorasmians had been destroyed, Pope Innocent showed himself even more tepid towards a Crusade to the Holy Land; but he could not withhold authority from the military Orders to collect men and money in Europe for an expedition against Egypt. The response proved disappointing. Frederick II naturally would not allow recruitment within his territories, since he wanted to retain his men for his struggle against the Holy See; Italy was in the midst of civil war; Spain was fighting the Moslems within its own boundaries; and the Scandinavians were converting pagans in the north at the point of the sword and with the blessing of the Church. In England, the Templars who preached the Crusade and begged contributions for its support were chased from several places by the indignant inhabitants. William de Sonnac, Grand Master of the Temple, sent a special appeal to Henry III, but Henry would neither venture on a Crusade himself nor take any active steps to encourage his subjects to assume the cross. He had frequently been in dispute with the Order and had threatened to seize its property in England. The Church and the military Orders, he complained, had acquired so many liberties and charters and possessions that they "raved with pride and haughtiness. What was given imprudently must be taken back prudently; and what was inconsiderately bestowed must be considerably recalled". The Master of the Temple in England broke out furiously at this threat and replied that the king would

be wise not to use such words. "So long as you exercise justice, you will reign", said the Master; "otherwise, you will no longer have a throne."

One European king, however, burned with a holy zeal to fight the infidel. In 1244, Louis IX of France was stricken with illness, and "so grievously", reports his chronicler, Joinville, "that it is said one of the ladies who nursed him thought that he was dead and wanted to cover his face with a cloth; but another lady, who was on the opposite side of the bed, would not permit his face to be covered, saying that he still lived. During this argument, our Lord worked within the king and gave him back his speech, which he had lost. The king asked for a crucifix and it was brought to him. When the queen, his mother, learned that his speech was restored, she was filled with great joy, but when she heard from him that he had taken the cross, she lamented so much that it was as if he had indeed died". St. Louis's three brothers—Robert, Count of Artois, Alphonse, Count of Poitiers, and Charles, Count of Anjou—and many of the French nobles followed the king's example and vowed themselves to the Crusade.

The Seventh Crusade set out from France in the autumn of 1248. Louis was accompanied by his queen, Marguerite, and had an army of between forty and fifty thousand men. It had been decided that the attack should be made on Egypt, and the Crusade first sailed to Cyprus, where the winter was passed. Baldwin II, Emperor of Constantinople, tried to induce Louis to lend his aid against the Byzantines, but the king insisted that his duty was to recover the Holy Land by crushing Egypt. After some negotiations with the Mongols, who suggested an alliance against the Turks, Louis left for Damietta in May, 1249, with 1,800 ships.

The military Orders enthusiastically supported the Crusade. The dream of subjugating Egypt had never been forgotten, and the Temple, the Hospital, and the Teutonic

Knights were eager to take advantage of the presence of a king so renowned as Louis and a Christian army which was not only large but much better equipped than most Crusading expeditions. The garrisons of Palestine were reduced in order that a strong force should be sent with the French to Damietta, and in June, 1249, William de Sonnac led several hundred Knights Templars from Acre.

Damietta was easily taken—"not by the strength of our own arms", said the Grand Master of the Temple, "but through the assistance and power of heaven". Although half of his ships had been blown off their course and had not yet rejoined him, Louis determined to land at once and after a short struggle he defeated a Moslem army which tried to repel him. In the Fifth Crusade, Damietta had proved that it could withstand a long siege, but it made little attempt to resist the French on this occasion. The inhabitants—misled, it is said, by a report that the Sultan had died and that no assistance could be sent to them—hastily evacuated the city. Trouble broke out when the Christians entered Damietta, for Louis would not surrender the third of the booty which the Church claimed as its share.

There were soon further quarrels. Some of the Crusaders wished to push on, but Louis preferred to wait till his brother, Alphonse of Poitiers, who had remained in France to collect reinforcements, could join the Crusade. The winter was passed at Damietta, and the Crusaders became demoralised in idleness. An English contingent had arrived and was soon on terms of enmity with the French. The Temple squabbled with the Hospital, the Hospital with the Teutonic Knights, and all three military organisations with the secular troops. The advance which had been promised for the spring was postponed to the summer and then to the autumn, and not before November, 1250, did the Crusade leave Damietta. Men had come from all parts of Christendom to serve under Louis and the army now numbered over seventy thousand;

but it was an army in which there was little discipline and much dispute. One part of the Crusaders wanted to attack Alexandria, another Cairo. The former would be much less difficult to capture, but Cairo was the capital and the seat of Moslem power and it was argued that "to destroy the serpent, you must first crush its head". Ignoring the advice of the military Orders, Louis decided to advance on Cairo.

The Turks harassed the Christians during the march, but only in the middle of December was a large Moslem army despatched to stop the invaders. Bibars, the Egyptian general, posted his men before Mansourah, and to give them battle and reach the town the Christians had to cross the Ashmoun Canal. All attempts to ford the canal failed, but in February an Arab offered to lead the Christians to a ford. Fourteen thousand men were chosen to cross the canal and hold the ford on the other side, where the Moslems had only a few hundred soldiers on guard. William de Sonnac and a detachment of the Templars formed the van of this advance force, with Robert of Artois and the English Earl of Salisbury in support (February 8th).

The canal was forded safely, and the Moslem guard scattered. The orders were that the advance force should not be tempted into pursuit, but Robert of Artois was eager for slaughter. The Templars protested that they had been chosen to lead the attack and that Robert had no right to push in front of them. Joinville reports that Robert's charger was held by a deaf knight. This knight, not hearing the protests of the Templars, shouted, "Forward, forward!" so loudly that he drowned everyone else. Robert at any rate pursued the Moslems, and the Templars, "feeling that shame would fall upon them if they allowed the count to take the lead, spurred after the enemy", who fled through Mansourah. The Christians gave up the pursuit on the plain beyond the town. When they attempted to rejoin the main army by passing through Mansourah, the Moslems

blocked the streets and Robert of Artois and three hundred knights were killed. The loss to the Temple was "full fourteen score men-at-arms" and only three of the brethren survived.

In the hope of saving his brother, Louis gave the order for a general attack, and after a fierce battle the Christians captured the Moslem camp outside Mansourah. The town itself, however, held out against numerous attacks, in which the Templars, who had asked and been given the honour of leading the assault on several occasions, lost more than half their men. William de Sonnac, the Grand Master, was one of the first to fall.

As the siege proceeded the supplies became exhausted and the Christians had to depend upon food brought by ship from Damietta. The Egyptians blocked the Nile and so made navigation impossible, and famine appeared in the Christian camp. When pestilence was added to famine, St. Louis opened up negotiations with the Sultan, Turan Shah, but the latter insisted that Louis himself must be hostage before any terms could be discussed, and the French would not deliver their king into the hands of the infidel. In April, after four tragic months spent within sight of Mansourah, Louis decided to lead his men back to Damietta. It was the retreat of a plague-stricken army in which there was little strength or will to resist attack, and the Christians were slaughtered mercilessly as they dragged themselves along the river bank. Bibars boasted that thirty thousand Christians were slain, and his prisoners included Louis and the king's two brothers. The Sultan offered Louis his freedom if he would surrender the castles held by the Christians in Palestine, but the king refused the condition. The castles, he said, were the property of the Temple or the Hospital and in the care of knights sworn never to deliver them up as the price of any man's deliverance, and he would not ask them to break their oath.

When all attempts to force Louis to surrender territory in the Holy Land had failed, Turan Shah agreed to release the king and the other prisoners if Damietta were surrendered and the Christians paid a ransom of half a million marks (later reduced by a fifth). Before the agreement could be carried out, Turan Shah was assassinated, but at the beginning of May the same terms were accepted by his successor, who insisted that the Count of Poitiers should remain a prisoner until half the ransom had been handed over. Louis had come to the East well supplied with money, but the cost of the expedition had been enormous and his treasury did not contain two hundred thousand marks.

Joinville proposed to Louis that thirty thousand marks should be borrowed from the Templars to make up the sum, but the Commander of the Temple said that the Order was forbidden to make such loans. The funds of the Order had been given for a particular purpose and no Templar had authority to disburse money for the relief of the king. Reginald de Vichier, at that time Marshal, showed how the Temple and the king could be satisfied. It was true, he agreed, that the Order could not lend the money, but if the gold were taken by force from the treasury of the Temple by the king's men, it would be a different matter. The hint was enough: Joinville hastened to the galley where the funds of the Temple were stored, and, lifting an axe, prepared to break open one of the chests. Reginald de Vichier wanted no more than this appearance of force. He handed over the keys to Joinville, who took the required thirty thousand marks to the king.

When the ransom had been paid, Alphonse of Poitiers was released and sailed with Louis to Acre. The army which had served under the king at Damietta was reduced to a sixth of its former strength: many of the Christians had been killed in battle or died from disease, and thousands still lingered in Moslem prisons in Egypt. Louis was advised

to return to France and collect another army with which to compel the Moslems to set the captives at liberty. He preferred, however, to send his two brothers to Europe to raise troops while he himself remained at Acre. Money came from France, but only small bands of men reached Louis.

The military Orders had relatively lost more heavily than the French in the Crusade. In every expedition, the Temple and the Hospital felt themselves bound to demand the most hazardous posts and outdo all others in battle, and their death-roll was always out of proportion to their numbers. The Orders had distinguished themselves in Egypt, and, as ever after a campaign in which the valour of the fraternities was praised, recruits were eager to be admitted into the Temple or Hospital. The few thousand men necessary to fill the ranks of the Orders were, however, quite inadequate to permit another attack to be launched on Egypt, and Louis was at length convinced that little help was to be expected from the efforts of his brothers to raise a force in Europe. The king therefore entered into negotiations to acquire assistance in the East so that Egypt would be forced to release the Christian prisoners. For a time there seemed to be hopes of an alliance with the Mongols, whose messengers Louis had met in Cyprus and who again sought him at Acre, but the discussions came to nothing. Then there was the project of an alliance with the Assassins. Before giving their aid to Louis, they asked, as they had asked of Amalric, that he should relieve them of the tribute paid to the Temple. The emissaries explained frankly that while it was easy for the Assassins to remove an opponent, they would find no advantage in killing the Grand Master of the Temple. The only result would be the appointment of another Grand Master equally formidable. The negotiations with the Assassins likewise proved abortive.

A more promising opportunity presented itself to Louis when Egypt sought his aid against Damascus, which had

accepted the suzerainty of Cairo but had broken away in 1250. Egypt promised to surrender all Christian prisoners in return for the support of the Crusaders, but internal dissensions among the Turks put an end to the proposal. Then it was the turn of Damascus. The Damascenes suggested that they should combine with the Christians to fight Egypt. Louis, however, had signed a truce of ten years with the Sultan and he hesitated to break it, even though its terms had been flagrantly violated by the Egyptians. By threatening to ally himself with Damascus, he was able to secure the freedom of many of the pilgrims who had been captured in Egypt, but thousands still remained in captivity.

Louis was in Syria for nearly four years after his return from Egypt. Most of those who had survived the expedition had sailed back to Europe, and his following was at one time less than two thousand men. The long negotiations with different princes had tried the patience of his nobles and given rise to quarrels among the Franks. The Temple and the Hospital resented the suggestion of alliance with the Assassins; Damascus was supported by the Temple while the Hospital urged Louis to combine with Egypt against the Damascenes; and the king was constantly assailed by one faction or another. Not only had Louis hoped to obtain freedom for all those captured in Egypt, but he had hoped, despite his misfortunes at Mansourah, to win back Jerusalem by a direct attack. The defection of most of the Crusaders had made that dream impossible. With the co-operation of the military Orders he succeeded in recapturing a few fortresses in the Holy Land, and his money paid for the rebuilding of Jaffa and Cæsarea and the strengthening of Acre. But the Seventh Crusade did no more.

In April, 1254, Louis set sail from Acre on his homeward journey. Many Franks, expecting a Moslem attack as soon as the king had gone, followed him and gave or sold their

properties to the military Orders, who had difficulty in finding sufficient brethren even to man the garrisons. Both the Temple and the Hospital had been eager for the assault on Egypt, but now they resumed their attempts to conclude peace treaties with the infidels. Egypt and Damascus, the two great enemies, were at war, but several of the minor princes led their forces into Christian territory. The Orders lost heavily in these raids, but the real fear was of a great campaign by Egypt to clear all the Franks from the East, a campaign which had only been postponed until the Damascus rebellion was crushed by Egypt.

Four years after the departure of St. Louis, the Franks were thrown into panic by an invasion, but it was an invasion not from Egypt, but from Persia. When the Mongols from Persia swept into the Holy Land, the Franks prophesied that the Latin states would be crushed unless assistance were sent from the West. The renewed appeals aroused little interest in Europe, but the invaders turned out to be no menace to the Christians. The Mongols looked on the Moslems as their enemies and their conquests were made in infidel territory. In 1260 they reduced the mighty Damascus and their eyes were set on the possession of Egypt. The Franks were little more than spectators of the contest that then raged. The Sultan sent the Mameluke Bibars, the general who had defeated St. Louis at Mansourah, to face the Mongols, and the victory went to the Egyptians. Bibars was dissatisfied with the reward given to him for his services, and he successfully planned the murder of the Sultan, mounting the throne of the country in which he had once been one of the meanest slaves.

Bibars vowed to drive the Franks from Syria, but for two years he was engaged in pacifying his empire. In 1262, by which time his iron rule had been imposed on Moslem Syria as well as Egypt, he marched into Antioch with an army which believed itself to be fighting a holy war. Fanaticism

among the Christians had been accompanied by savagery in the First Crusade; among the Moslems, fanaticism was now accompanied by even greater brutality. Bibars's orders were to kill the Latins, and his army obeyed with alacrity. The defence of the country rested with the military Orders, but the combined strength of the Temple, the Hospital and the Teutonic Order amounted to no more than a few hundred knights and several thousand commoners, most of whom were needed to garrison strongholds. In 1265 the whole principality of Antioch had been taken by the Egyptians, and Bibars then marched into the kingdom of Jerusalem.

Yet while the Moslems were raging through the Christian territories, the Temple and the Hospital were engaged in deadly struggles against each other. When a quarrel arose between Genoa and Pisa regarding a convent which separated the quarters of the maritime communities in Acre, the Temple supported Pisa and the Hospital took the side of Genoa. "They who had been looked upon as the protectors of the Church showed themselves to be the most wicked disturbers of the peace, each other, and of that Church. Because of some deadly feud, the Hospitallers rose to a man against the Templars, and after losing very many of their own men, utterly destroyed the Templars, so that scarcely a man escaped, whilst a great many of the Hospitallers still survived. Never, indeed, was such a fearful slaughter known to have taken place among the Christians, especially men who served religion. After this calamity, the Templars in the Holy Land consulted in these circumstances, and it is said that they sent instructions to the brethren of the Order in every country to leave a few in each house and, putting aside all other matters, come in haste to the Holy Land to make up the vacancies in their fraternity due to the death of so many of their brethren, and also to exact a fearful vengeance from the Hospitallers by force of arms. Throughout the world there was much fear that, unless their anger

was appeased by God, the peace and security of Christendom would be destroyed by this terrible feud."

If the Temple ever considered such a project as the chronicler mentions, they soon abandoned it. The recruits who came from the West were used to strengthen the garrisons of the Templars' fortresses against Bibars. The strongholds of the three military Orders were defended with great skill and desperate courage, but almost all of them were captured or forced to surrender. Arsuf, Cæsarea, Beirut, Loadicea, Jaffa, and the great fortresses of the Temple at Safed and Belfort fell quickly to Bibars, and by 1268 the Westerners retained little more than Tyre, Acre, and Tripoli.

Europe was moved to loud lamentations by the tidings of Egypt's success. "Nearly the whole of the illustrious chivalry of the Temple is annihilated", wrote the Pope (Clement IV), in referring to the disasters in the East. He invited all Christians to take the cross, but difficulties nearer home did not permit the Holy See to organise a new Crusade actively. St. Louis, however, felt that he had been called by God to lead another army against the infidels. His advisers begged him not to leave France, but the king would not be denied. When St. Louis dedicated himself anew to the holy war, the Church exhibited more interest in the state of the East, but the emissaries of the Pope received little response when they preached the Crusade. Outside Louis's own kingdom, the only considerable convert was Prince Edward, later Edward I of England.

Louis left France in July, 1270, with between fifty and sixty thousand men, but he did not lead this army to Palestine. Mohammed, Bey of Tunis, was alleged to be on the point of adopting Christianity, and Louis felt that his first duty was to secure the assistance of so useful a convert; then, in collaboration with Mohammed, he would attack Egypt. The Bey, however, scoffed at the idea of accepting Christianity when Louis reached Tunis in the middle of July,

and a Moslem army was drawn up to contest the landing of the Crusaders. The Tunisian forces were defeated after a battle near the site of Carthage, and the French decided to make no advance until Charles of Anjou (now King of Sicily) came with reinforcements. Every previous Crusade had suffered from pestilence, and the Eighth Crusade was like its predecessors in this respect. Disease spread through the army and its victims were numbered by hundreds every day. Louis himself was stricken with the fever and died a few hours after Charles of Anjou reached Tunis.

When other expeditions had prepared to attack Egypt, a contingent of Templars and Hospitallers had been sent to lend their aid, but the military Orders could supply no representatives from the East to co-operate in the Eighth Crusade. The Orders had held on precariously to their few remaining possessions in the belief that Louis would speedily come to their rescue, and the diversion of the expedition to Tunis had been regarded as a disaster. The command of the Crusade devolved upon Charles of Anjou after the death of St. Louis, and the Syrian Franks appealed to him to lead it to their assistance before everything was lost. Charles had other views. Almost all the territory in the East belonged to the Temple or the Hospital, and Charles had no great love for either military Order. He had embarked upon the Crusade only because Louis forced him to do so, and now he was anxious to return to his own kingdom. He made peace with Mohammed of Tunis, adduced reasons to the pilgrims why the Crusade should be postponed, and returned to Sicily.

Edward of England, who had joined the French at Tunis, protested against this decision, and, although he had no more than three hundred knights and nine hundred commoners, he made for Acre in the spring of 1271. His coming was hailed with jubilation by the exhausted Christians. The Moslems were in the vicinity of Acre, and the loss of that port might mean the end of the Latin kingdom. Edward felt confident

of victory even with so small a force. The Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Knights accepted his leadership, and an army of some six thousand men was collected. The Moslems abandoned their threatened attack on Acre, and trouble in Egypt prevented Bibars from sending reinforcements to his general. Edward had hoped to regain some of the lost possessions of the Latins, but he realised that with so insignificant a following he was bound to fail. The raids that he led into infidel territory were, however, serious enough to cause petitions for assistance to be made to the Sultan by his subjects, and in 1272 Bibars proposed a truce of ten years with the Christians. Edward accepted but he swore to come back with a larger force. He was, however, called to the throne of England soon afterwards, and never had the opportunity to see the East again.

Bibars respected the treaty, but some of his feudatories would not be deterred from attacking the Franks. Appeals from the Temple to the princes of Christendom were tossed aside, and so desperate did the position become that within a year of the truce, the Grand Master, Thomas Berard, and a deputation of Templars visited England to beg in person for aid. Edward I supported the Grand Master's appeal but few men could be found to take the cross. The Pope, Gregory IX, called a council of the Church at Lyons, and Thomas described the precarious situation of the Christians. A new Crusade was proclaimed and a tax levied on the Church to pay for the costs of the expedition. With the death of Pope Gregory, however, the project collapsed.

The embassy from the Temple returned to Acre in despair. While entreaties continued to be made to the West, all faith had been lost, and the Franks looked upon expulsion as inevitable. The military Orders seemed to have only one aim—to squeeze as much money as they could from their properties before Islam seized the whole land. In 1282, however, the Christians had a further lease of life. Kalaoun,

who had become Sultan in 1280, agreed to extend the truce for another ten years. A few months previously, the Mongols had again challenged Egypt, and, although Kalaoun had been successful in the struggle, his army had suffered so severely that he was not ready to deliver the final blow to the Latin dominion.

But he was resolved that the Franks should be expelled, and three years before the termination of the truce he found an excuse for marching into Latin territory. On the ground that a number of Moslem traders had been killed in the market at Acre—the cause of the trouble is said have been the discovery by a Christian of a liaison between his wife and a Moslem—he declared war, and in 1289 his army was thrown against the Franks. Since it was hopeless to meet the Moslems in the field, the Christians shut themselves up in their few remaining fortresses and in fortified towns. Some of the castles held out for months against the Egyptians, but in two years every part of the Latin territory had fallen to the Moslems with the exception of Acre.

In April, 1291, a hundred thousand Moslems besieged the last Latin possession in the East. William de Beaujeu, the Grand Master of the Temple, was entrusted with the command of the port, which had a garrison of about fifteen thousand men, including nine hundred knights. Cities less strong than Acre had held out for months against immense forces, but the Christians despaired of saving the city, and it was proposed that, as ample transport existed in the harbour, the garrison should retire to Cyprus. The aged, the children and the sick and many of the women were taken to that island, but de Beaujeu refused to desert Acre, and he was supported by every knight of the military Orders and by most of the citizens.

The Moslems were well supplied with siege machinery, and the walls were pounded day and night. For six weeks all attempts to take the city failed, but when one of the towers

was destroyed, nearly a quarter of the garrison deserted the city and sailed for Cyprus. A few days later, the Moslems succeeded in forcing part of the wall and gained an entrance into Acre. They were driven back by the furious charge of a picked body of Templars and Hospitallers. Next morning, the assault was renewed and for three days it was kept up with scarcely a pause. On the third day (May 18th), the Moslems again succeeded in entering the town, and then began a massacre in which most of the defenders perished. William de Beaujeu was killed in the fight and of his following of Templars only three hundred survived the day. This force fought its way to the Temple, a great building on a promontory in the south-west of the city. It already sheltered several hundred other Christians, among them some women who had refused to leave Acre.

Terms were discussed, and the Moslems promised to spare the lives of all the defenders. The Christians accepted and admitted three hundred Moslems into the building as a proof of good faith. The Moslems were no sooner within the Temple than they attempted to interfere with the women; thereupon the brethren rushed upon the infidels and, it is recorded, put every Moslem to death. When the news of this slaughter was carried to the Egyptian leader, he launched his army against the Temple, but the defenders defied the assaults which were maintained till darkness fell. The Temple at Acre had direct access to the sea on three sides, and under cover of night eleven Templars escaped from the building by a secret door and, embarking on a boat that was in readiness, escaped to Cyprus with the wealth of the Order.

In the morning the Moslems resumed operations, but the Templars, entrenched in one of the towers, beat off the attack. The defenders were provisioned to withstand a long siege, and the Sultan, despairing of taking the tower by assault, gave orders for its destruction. The foundations were undermined and the tower supported with wooden props. Then, as soon

as all was complete, the props were set alight. When the flames had weakened the supports, the tower toppled over with a mighty crash, and every Templar was crushed or burned to death.

CHAPTER XIII

CHRISTENDOM AND ISLAM

ISLAM had taken nearly two hundred years to expel the Franks from Palestine. It is astonishing that the Latins ever won a kingdom in the East, more astonishing still that they were able to retain their footing for so long a period. The almost constant quarrels among the Moslem princes saved the Westerners from extinction on numerous occasions but, even when Islam was united, the Franks succeeded in holding territory in the midst of their enemy for many years. Sometimes a Crusade from the West had protected the Christians in a crisis; sometimes natural forces, such as earthquakes, had been their saviour; sometimes the Moslem princes had been betrayed by their followers. Most of the credit, however, belongs to the military Orders. They had no equal in the East for discipline, skill and courage.

The Moslem victories were, with a few exceptions, won by sheer force of numbers. The armies of Islam and Christendom in the Holy Land were always vastly disproportionate, and there is hardly a single great battle in which the Franks were not outnumbered by at least three to one. Such a disparity was bound to tell in the end, and, had it not been for the fortresses erected by the Christians, would have told much sooner. The castles built by the military Orders and the Christian nobles were almost impregnable. A few hundred defenders behind the walls of a fortress such as Safed could resist an army, and famine was no menace in castles which were often provisioned to withstand a siege of as long as three years. The great fortress of the Temple,

Castle Pilgrim, had pastures, woods, and even a salt mine within its walls, as well as a spring, a fish pond, and enough food to last a thousand men for several years.

For the first half of the Latin occupation, the Moslems feared the invaders, but Islam realised its own strength before the middle of the twelfth century. By then, however, the Christians were accepted, if not tolerated, in the East. They had fought with Moslem princes as well as against them, and had proved valuable allies to, for instance, the Damascenes. Several of the Moslem emirs preferred the Christians rather than their own co-religionists as neighbours, and though most of the independent princes were crushed by Zenghi, Nouredin and Saladin, the friendly feeling towards the Christians remained among the Moslem inhabitants of the territories bordering the Latin states.

The belief in the righteousness of the holy war had been the inspiration of the first Crusaders, and, lacking such an inspiration to spur them to feats of tremendous endurance and deeds of wild heroism, they would never have established the Latin kingdom. The military Orders retained that belief long after it disappeared among the other Christian settlers, and the Templars and the Hospitallers fought with the mad valour of men who sacrifice themselves joyfully in the knowledge that they serve no earthly monarch but a King who promises an eternal reward. The Moslems never showed this quality to the same degree. The Jihad, the holy war of Islam, was real enough, but it did not grip the imagination of the Moslems deeply. No such hosts marched from Egypt or from Syria as had marched from Europe; the East had not seen hundreds of thousands of Moslems who, throwing aside everything else as worthless, believing that their Creator had expressly called them to service, assured that a heavenly reward awaited those who died in the fight, advanced happily to their doom. The Christian pilgrims had dreamed of a land flowing with milk and honey, had been certain that their

troubles and trials and difficulties would be over as soon as they reached Palestine, and that everyone would be rich, everyone be happy. The Moslems, however, knew the Holy Land, and to them it was no enchanted country.

Nor was there any deep patriotism to inspire the Moslems. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries had no national feeling as we know it to-day, and in any case the Moslems had taken Palestine from the Byzantines and had never colonised it greatly. To some Saracens it seemed intolerable that invaders should hold Palestine, to some it seemed abominable that the worshippers of Christ should not be exterminated by the followers of Mahomet, but neither feeling was widespread. Most attacks on the Latins were made by princes greedy for land or plunder, or by leaders eager for glory, and there was no popular rising on a large scale against the Christians. Religious enmity played its part from time to time, but among the Moslems it was usually fostered by a leader for his own ends and was not a spontaneous movement. Nouredin and Saladin had regarded themselves as engaged in a holy war against the Christians; so, too, had Bibars; and among their armies were thousands who believed that they fought as a sacred duty to the Prophet. Most Moslems, however, did not feel that their religion required them to massacre the Christians or sweep them into the sea.

As no widespread religious antipathy existed among the Moslems, the Franks were often given the chance to retain their possessions because of the indifference of their enemies. Islam wanted Jerusalem, but not with the same fierceness as Christendom. Some of the other towns held by the Franks were valuable as ports or markets, but they had no religious significance to Islam, though they were holy to the Christians. The Moslems were attracted principally by the wealth of the Latin lands. Under the Christian rule Palestine was one of the most prosperous countries in the world. It was better cultivated than it had been for centuries before the invasion

of the Christians (and than it was to be for nearly six centuries after their expulsion); and it had a flourishing trade with most of the kingdoms of Europe. Had such a prize been in the hands of a Moslem prince, other Moslem princes would have longed to seize it and would have struggled to take Palestine from their fellow-religionists quite as vigorously as they struggled to wrest it from the Christians.

Between the great Crusades, and sometimes during the expeditions from the West, Jerusalem lacked an adequate army. Its forces were much too weak to make any lasting progress against Islam. The kingdom made a number of conquests in the first fifty years after its establishment; but the Latins were not then fighting a united Islam. Its wars were against independent Moslem princes, and these princes were often opposed by their own subjects or faced with aggression from neighbouring Moslem rulers. Even so, however, the Franks were highly fortunate in their early campaigns. Compared with the hosts which Islam could, and later did, put in the field, the Latin army was trifling in size. The man-power of the Franks was insufficient even to provide for the defence of the fortresses and castles. At some periods not more than thirty men could be spared to garrison places built for at least two hundred. The strongest battlements were useless without a reasonable quota of defenders.

The legacy of the Second Crusade and most of the later Crusades was increased bitterness among the Saracens. After two generations Islam tended to take the Franks in Palestine for granted, but new expeditions from Europe aroused enmity among the Moslems towards all Christians. The settlers in the Holy Land were in themselves comparatively harmless, but the Crusaders from the West aimed at crushing all Islam, at taking Bagdad or Cairo. In self-defence, the Moslems were forced to unite against the newcomers from Europe, though even when most threatened Islam was never quite free from civil war; and such alliances did not always

dissolve with the situation which had brought them into being. A group of Moslem princes who had been too busy fighting among themselves to pay much attention to the Latin states would sink their differences and combine against a Crusade. They might be defeated by the Crusaders, but as soon as the Western army had withdrawn the allied princes would descend on the settlers. The alliance did not last and the princes were soon ranged against each other again; but before the combination broke down severe blows were perhaps inflicted on Jerusalem, or Antioch, or Tripoli.

A Crusade might add territory to the Latin states, and it was pleasant to the settlers to have new lands opened up to them. Every addition of territory, however, meant an actual weakening of the strength of the kingdom. One of the problems of the Latin states was the amount of territory which had to be defended; every new conquest meant more castles and more men employed on garrison duty. The Moslem prince who had been dispossessed by a Crusading army waited until that army had returned to the West, and then threw himself on the Latins who occupied his land. Sometimes he captured other Christian territory as well as regained what he had lost, but, whether he did so or not, the number of Christian defenders was reduced by losses in such battles, and the Franks were worn down by these almost constant struggles for the possession of places acquired by later Crusades from Europe.

For many years the Temple and the Hospital could not resist the lure of conquest, and, though well aware of the penalty that must be paid as soon as a Crusade had left the country, they encouraged the Western armies to press into Moslem territory. Even the rashest and most foolhardy of the leaders learned by experience that the price of such conquests was too high. With the assistance of fifty thousand pilgrims from the West, the brethren might capture a rich town. The Temple would probably be able to garrison the

captured town only by reducing the number of defenders in several other places. After much stern fighting and the loss of three-quarters of the garrison, the Temple would perhaps be ejected in a year or two and lose much more than a single town. In later years, therefore, the Orders tried to restrain the Crusaders. New conquests were a liability. The first need of the Latin states was a permanent army to defend what the Christians already held.

But it was impossible for the Temple and the other Orders to refuse to support an expedition from the West, no matter how much they disagreed with the tactics of its leaders. The Orders existed to fight the infidel—Christendom believed that the Temple should have no other duty—and it would have been a grave scandal if the Templars had withheld their co-operation. Europe did not understand, and few attempts were made to explain, the futility of bringing a huge army into a country for a short time, an army which might temporarily increase the Latin possessions, but which would certainly leave behind it enmity and bitterness towards the Christians. Most Crusaders from the West were men who still clung to the idea of a holy war and believed that all who would not accept Christianity should be slaughtered. The Moslem was the traditional enemy, and the Christians demanded to be led into the lands of the accursed infidel. Of what use to try to convince such men that the best interests of the Latin states were to be served otherwise than by killing the Moslems and taking their territory? Even Crusading kings and other leaders from the West did not appreciate that war in the East was different from war in Europe.

All three military Orders were inconsistent. When they were pressed their natural inclination was to demand men from the West. But when the later Crusades came in answer to such appeals, the military Orders were often antagonistic. It was not merely that they were jealous that the Crusaders would win too much glory, though that was an ever-present

fear; often it seemed that the military Orders wanted the army from the West only to help them in their negotiations with the Moslems, and they showed themselves aggrieved when the pilgrims insisted on an offensive, whether or not that course fitted in with the policy of the Temple or the Hospital. It sometimes took several years to organise an army in Europe, and by the time the Crusaders reached Palestine circumstances might have changed considerably. The pilgrims, however, could hardly be expected to agree that, after having come so far, they should be denied the chance to fight the Moslems.

The loss of the Holy Land has been ascribed partly to the foundation of the Latin Empire in Constantinople; and the capture of the Byzantine capital by the Fourth Crusade did undoubtedly weaken the cause of the Franks in Palestine. The pilgrims from the West who sought adventure now had the choice of giving their services to Byzantium or the Holy Land, and fewer pilgrims chose to fight the Moslems than before the conquest of Constantinople. But too much importance has been given to this factor. Even had all the pilgrims who went to Byzantium offered their services to Palestine, the ultimate result of the contest would have been the same. It is possible, however, that if the Byzantine Emperors had been left in possession of their capital, an alliance would have been made between the Byzantines in Constantinople and the Christians in Jerusalem, though they were always suspicious of each other. While such a combination might conceivably have proved too strong for Islam, the later history of Byzantium does not suggest that the Moslems would have found the Byzantines very formidable foes even in alliance with the Franks.

Much of the responsibility for the disasters in Palestine must rest with the Holy See. The Church starved the Holy Land of men by proclaiming the holy war against the Albigensians and Frederick II and inviting Christians to don

the cross for other expeditions which were a perversion of the original idea of the Crusades. This practice not only directly diverted men from war in the East, but it brought the whole Crusading movement into disrepute. When Christendom saw Crusaders launched against European princes, it feared the power which was being given into the hands of the papacy. Men recruited to fight the Moslem were suddenly commanded to forget their vows and fight against a country which had incurred the displeasure of the Church. The rulers discouraged recruitment for Crusades since men who assumed the cross might be used to advance the soaring ambitions of the Holy See.

The thirteenth century, however, did not blame the foundation of the Latin kingdom in Constantinople, the conduct of the Church, or the shortage of men for the expulsion of the Franks from the Holy Land. The Middle Ages believed that God had stricken His people because of their sins, and that only penitence on the part of all Christendom could hope to appease His anger. But other explanations were also forthcoming. The Italian traders had allowed Islam to buy munitions of war and thus betrayed the Franks; the kingdom had been handicapped financially by the extravagance of the Latins; and, most popular of all, the military Orders had been careless and indifferent. Later the charge was made that the Temple had actually sold the Latin kingdom to the Moslems, but at first the accusation was that of slackness.

A charge of slackness was not unexpected. Great armies were rare in Europe, and Christendom, remembering the thousands of men who had taken service with the fighting Orders, was easily convinced that the Templars, the Hospitallers, and the Teutonic Order should have been more than a match for Islam. The chroniclers wrote of the idleness of the Knights of the Temple and the Hospital, and their words were repeated everywhere. Hardly a village

but did not contain someone who had been to the Holy Land and was able to speak from personal knowledge of the fighting monks or at least retail the stories current in the Latin East. Such a returned traveller might praise the courage of the Knights Templars, but he would also tell of the luxurious lives of the brethren and whisper the tales of the jealousy and rivalry of the Orders. When Islam triumphed and an explanation had to be found for the failure of the Franks, these tales were recalled and people reminded each other how the Temple and the Hospital had squandered the money given for the holy war and wasted their strength in internecine struggles.

Scandal must have something on which to feed, and the undoubted jealousy of the fighting Orders offered excellent opportunities to the scandalmongers. The Temple and the Hospital had been rivals from the middle of the twelfth century. Each Order wanted to outshine the other—to have more land, more castles, more money, more men. The fraternities competed with each other for members, and in their eagerness to swell their numbers were not particular whom they enrolled; they planned to attract great barons whose membership would add lustre to their Order, and to enlist recruits with large fortunes. The rivalry, however, was often more healthy than otherwise. The Orders were spurred to mighty deeds to prove their superior courage and daring, and many of the most glorious victories were won because the Temple wished to outdo the Hospital or vice versa. On several occasions their jealousy led to fights between them, but the frequency and extent of such clashes have been very much exaggerated. In the last fifty years of the Latin occupation, however, there were at least three considerable fights in which the losses were heavy on both sides.

The quarrels of the Temple and the Hospital caused unnecessary loss of life and disturbed the kingdom, but where

the Orders most weakened the Latins was in pursuing opposing policies. As the most experienced warriors of the East they exercised a considerable influence on the course of nearly every Crusade, and yet they often adopted entirely different views. Sometimes the leaders of the Temple were sincere in emphasising the advantage to be gained through supporting a certain Moslem prince, but frequently the Templars would favour a particular line of action for no more reason than because the Hospital opposed it. The Crusade of Edward I (when Prince Edward) was almost ruined because the Temple insisted on supporting the Damascenes while the Hospital lent its aid to the Egyptians.

During most of the Latin occupation, however, both Orders were agreed that the way to Palestine lay through Egypt. The Temple had refused to take part in Amalric's third and most disastrous expedition to Egypt, and the Hospital had taken the side of Egypt against Damascus on several occasions; but in general the two Orders were always enthusiastic for an attack on Cairo. Even when they were pursuing a policy of peace in Syria, they enthusiastically supported descents on Egypt. They were not alone in the opinion that the safe custody of the Holy Land was impossible until Egypt had been crushed; for almost every Christian military leader of the thirteenth century shared that view. Especially after Saladin had united Egypt and Moslem Syria under one rule, the Christians felt that Jerusalem could never be secure until Egypt was defeated.

Egypt with its fabled wealth was an unfailing lure, and the Templars and the Hospitallers longed to march into Cairo as conquerors and enrich themselves with its vast treasures. But though the policy of winning Jerusalem by invading Egypt was to some extent due to a passion for spoil, the military leaders were correct in their belief that Egypt must be crushed if Jerusalem were to be the permanent possession of the Christians. The city of Jerusalem was

precious to the Moslems as well as the Christians, and Egypt would enter into treaties with the Latins for only a few years at a time—the longest peace negotiated by Egypt with the Christians was for eleven years. As soon as a treaty expired, Egypt launched another attack, and the Christians realised that the Moslems would never acquiesce in the Latin conquest of the Holy City so long as they had in Egypt a vast reservoir which hosts could be recruited by the cry that the Christians polluted a city sacred to the Prophet. The Crusaders twice came near to accomplishing their ambition in Egypt. John of Brienne or St. Louis might have marched as victors into Cairo had fate been a little kinder.

For the last fifty years, the Latins retained a kingdom in the East, sadly shrunk though it was, only through the tolerance and indifference of the Moslems. After the Third Crusade, which recovered some of the lands taken by Saladin in the years following the disastrous engagement at Hittin, the Christians had hoped to win back further territory by allying themselves with discontented Moslem princes. For a time the policy proved successful. Saladin's three sons and his brother Saphadin, among whom Egypt and Moslem Syria were divided, were at war, and each claimant was anxious to obtain Christian support. In the end, no open alliance was made with any of them, but the Christians were able to secure treaties which left them in possession of what Cœur de Lion had won. In after years, the Latins were not content merely with asking a price for their neutrality. When the Templars and Hospitallers became powerful in the land, they gave active support to some of the Moslem rulers. The disadvantages of that course were evident. A Moslem prince at war with a neighbouring ruler would gladly promise concessions in return for Christian aid, but as soon as the quarrel was settled, the ex-enemies showed a tendency to combine against the Christians who had interfered. Not for many years, however, did either the Temple

or the Hospital appreciate the risk of these pacts, which were especially dangerous when each Order supported a different prince in a campaign and thus the hatred of both combatants was aroused. Indeed the lesson was never properly learned, and until the last some houses of the Templars and Hospitallers intervened in Moslem faction fights.

During the last half century of the Latin kingdom, the Templars seemed to have despaired not only of recapturing Jerusalem, but of retaining what they still possessed. There was even a suggestion that the Order should voluntarily give up the hopeless contest and transfer its activities to Europe, and some of the leaders might have welcomed such a course. But it is unlikely that the proposal could have been seriously considered. The Temple had been founded to carry on the struggle against Islam and maintained for more than a century and a half for that purpose; and the fiercest criticism would have been aroused had the brethren retreated from the East.

Only a few of the members escaped the Moslem vengeance at Acre and found shelter at Cyprus in 1291. A general chapter was held, and Jacques de Molay, who had been Grand Preceptor of England, was chosen as Grand Master. The Hospitallers and the King of Cyprus (who had led five hundred knights to the defence of Acre) were ready to co-operate in another attempt to crush the Moslem power. Several expeditions to Syria and Egypt were organised before the end of the century, but they proved notable only for the disasters that attended them. The Christians still clung to the belief that Egypt could be reduced, and in 1300 a fierce assault was made on Alexandria. The abject failure of that venture cooled the ardour of the Templars for the conquest of Egypt, and it was decided to try to re-establish a settlement at Tortosa. The project turned out to be as unsuccessful as the attack on Egypt. The Hospitallers sought new territory to conquer and Rhodes, and later Malta,

became the headquarters from which they waged a courageous but hopeless war against Islam.

Jacques de Molay and his band of Templars, reduced to less than two hundred knights, lingered in Cyprus till 1306. Then, on June 6th of that year, a letter come from the Pope to the Grand Master. "We command you to join us at once", wrote Clement V, and de Molay unhesitatingly obeyed the fatal summons.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

THE First Crusade had been preached by Urban II when he was an exile from his own See of Rome, and his successors during the whole Crusading era were likewise faced with rebellion among the Roman people. The citizens hankered to set up a republic which would revive the ancient glories of Rome and they refused to recognise the temporal authority claimed by the Holy See. There were few popes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries who had not to flee from Rome, and some of them were not even allowed to enter it. The people often had strong support in their struggle with the papacy, for the German Empire was engaged in a bitter feud with the Holy See and was eager to foster rebellion against the popes.

Henry IV, the imperial ruler, had set up an anti-pope, Guibert, in opposition to Urban II; and for nearly two hundred years the Church was frequently to have its pope elected by the cardinals and bishops and its anti-pope backed by the Emperors. The quarrel between the Church and the Empire at the end of the eleventh century related to the question of investitures, a quarrel in which all Christendom was involved at one time or another. The Church claimed that no layman could install a bishop or abbot in office, and that any prince who dared to attempt such investiture was properly subject to excommunication. It was the practice of the Emperor to choose the nominees for the great positions of the Church within his territory, and for political and economic reasons, as well as for the sake of prestige, Henry rejected

the pretensions of the papacy. The investiture struggle between the Church and the Empire was ended by the Concordat of Worms. In 1106, Henry agreed to surrender the investiture of the clergy with their symbols of office, and the Church undertook that the Emperor should have the right to receive homage from the bishops for their temporal possessions. The Concordat was a compromise, but although the Church had been forced to give up some of its original demands, it had humbled the Emperor, the strongest secular leader in Christendom. Success in this contest would have been impossible but for the First Crusade. The miracle of a great army recruited in every land in Christendom by the Church, to serve the Church, and achieve the ambition of the Church had restored the prestige of the papacy.

The investiture question was part of a wider problem: whether the Church was to dominate the Empire or the Empire to dominate the Church. In the new trial of strength which broke out between them in 1125, the papacy was to meet with many grave reverses. In that year died Henry V, the last of his house of Franconia. Two claimants fought for the throne of the Empire—Lothaire of Supplinburg, the leader of the Guelphs, and the Hohenstaufen Frederick, Duke of Swabia, the leader of the Ghibellines, who, however, subsequently resigned his claims in favour of his brother Conrad. The Pope (Honorius II) supported Lothaire and excommunicated the Hohenstaufen Conrad, but the latter ascended the imperial throne in 1137 on the death of Lothaire. Conrad had little respect for the papacy. When the Pope was chased from Rome by the citizens and adherents of the anti-pope, Conrad III found excuses for not coming to the assistance of the Holy See for over twelve years. On his return from the Second Crusade, Conrad was broken in health and died soon afterwards (1152), leaving the Empire to his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa.

Frederick Barbarossa had even less respect for the papacy, and

quarrelled with it almost as soon as he had mounted the throne of the Empire. The interpretation of the Concordat of Worms was open to doubt, and Frederick claimed that he was justified in intervening to fill a vacancy in the archbishopric of Magdeburg. Two candidates were put forward by the Church, each supported by a strong faction which refused to consider the rival candidate, and when a deadlock occurred, the Emperor presented his own nominee. Both parties accepted the newcomer, and Frederick promptly treated him as the duly appointed archbishop, despite the complaints of the papacy. Shortly afterwards Frederick marched into Italy for the double purpose of quelling rebellion against the Empire which had broken out among the Lombards and of receiving the iron crown from the Pope. The Emperor did not meet the Pope (Hadrian IV) until 1155, and then Frederick withheld the homage which, the Pope insisted, had always been paid by the secular princes to the supreme spiritual ruler. That particular tussle was won by the papacy. Hadrian was encouraged by his success, and he demanded that Barbarossa—now back in Germany—should in effect acknowledge that he held the Empire as the fief of the Church. The Pope also commanded the Emperor to take action against Sicily, which was in dispute with both the papacy and the Empire. Frederick ignored both injunctions from the Holy See. Hadrian therefore negotiated an independent agreement with Sicily and turned that kingdom into his ally, although it was still the enemy of Barbarossa, and gave papal support to the Lombards, who were again in rebellion against the Empire. Frederick was threatened with excommunication if he did not come to terms with the insurgents.

Hadrian died in 1159 before putting this threat into practice, and two candidates claimed the See of St. Peter's—Roland (Alexander III), who supported Hadrian's policy of an alliance with Sicily and the Lombards against Barbarossa; and Octavian, who favoured peace with the Emperor.

Frederick declared that, as Emperor, it was his duty to summon a council of the Church to decide between the claimants, but the assumption that any secular prince could convoke a council or interfere in spiritual affairs was challenged by Alexander. Octavian did not disdain the Emperor's invitation, and a council composed almost entirely of prelates from the imperial territories declared him to be the true pope. Alexander therefore excommunicated the Emperor. He had already excommunicated Octavian, and Octavian, of course, had quickly excommunicated Alexander.

Alexander was forced to flee from Italy, but he was recognised as the leader of the Church almost everywhere except within the Empire. He obtained the support of France and Italy, he organised the Lombards for renewed opposition, he helped Sicily against Barbarossa, and even sought assistance in Byzantium. Frederick crossed the Alps into Italy in 1167 and occupied Rome, where (Octavian having died in the meantime) he placed another anti-pope, Guido, in the Holy See as Paschal III. On the way back to Germany, however, the League of Lombard cities defeated Barbarossa, and nine years later, when he advanced once more against the Lombards, the League won so decisive a victory that Frederick had to sue for peace. From the Lombard cities and from Sicily he accepted terms that he felt to be humiliating, and he acknowledged Alexander as the true Pope only with much reluctance. Not until Barbarossa had done homage to him, admitting the superiority of the papal ruler by holding the stirrup and leading the mount of the Pope, did Alexander withdraw the ban of excommunication against the Emperor. It was a great triumph for the Pope, but though Alexander had humbled Barbarossa, he could not discipline the populace of Rome. The Pope was chased from his See and died in exile in 1179.

Nor was his successor, Lucius III, any more successful with the people of the Eternal City, for he, too, was barred

from Rome. His relations with Frederick were comparatively friendly for five years, but disagreements arose when the Emperor marched into Italy in 1184. Lucius, a weak Pope, would probably have given in to Barbarossa's demands if pressed, but the next Pope, Urban III, adopted an attitude of defiance. While the contest was raging, Christendom learned of the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, and Frederick, patching up his quarrel with the Church, started out on the Third Crusade. On his death in that expedition, the throne fell to his son, Henry VI. The new Emperor assumed the superiority of the Empire over the papacy and on several occasions interfered with what the Church regarded as its rights. Attempts to humble him failed, but when he died in 1197 the struggle that broke out for his throne gave the Church an opportunity to assert its authority.

Innocent III, who occupied the papal chair from 1198, was determined to recover the lost prestige of the Church. The Empire had been left by Henry VI to his son, Frederick, but Frederick was a child, and Philip of Swabia, brother of the late Emperor, claimed the throne for himself and had the support of the Ghibellines. The Guelphs, however, had a vigorous leader in Otto of Brunswick, and civil war spread throughout the Empire. This was Innocent's great chance. Frederick Barbarossa had tried to adjudicate between rival candidates to the Holy See, now Innocent claimed that he should decide between rival candidates to the throne of the Empire. There were three possible rulers—Otto, Philip, and the young Frederick. Philip and Frederick were of the house of Hohenstaufen, which was distrusted by the papacy. Innocent therefore favoured the Guelph Otto, but he felt that it would be dangerous for the Church openly to champion Otto until that claimant appeared to be likely to win. For three years, Innocent would give no decision. When, however, the Guelphs were in the ascendant in 1201, the Pope declared himself against Philip of Swabia.

The support of the Holy See helped Otto in his fight against Philip, but the fortunes of the struggle varied. Six years after Innocent had declared for Otto, the war was still being fought furiously, and the advantage had been gained by Philip of Swabia. The Pope had no intention of backing the loser in the contest, and he proposed that Otto, in return for certain territorial concessions, should acknowledge Philip as Emperor. Otto indignantly refused to abdicate and quarrelled with Innocent over the proposal. The war was resumed, but now Innocent had changed sides and assisted the Ghibellines. When, however, Philip of Swabia was murdered in June, 1208, and there seemed little likelihood of a new Ghibelline champion to oppose Otto, Innocent rallied to the support of the Guelphs once more.

But Otto would not forgive Innocent for his desertion. He led an army into Italy, forced the Pope to confer the crown on him, and, on the way back, overran lands which the Church claimed as its own but which Otto insisted belonged to the Empire. Further causes of disagreement arose between Otto and the Holy See, and Innocent made up his mind to depose the Guelph. He had an excellent candidate for the throne in the young Frederick, son of Henry VI, who would take the place of Philip of Swabia and obtain the allegiance of the Ghibellines. Frederick was a Hohenstaufen and as such distrusted by the Church, but Innocent determined to take the risk of making him Emperor. His championship of the young aspirant was skilful and successful. The Pope stirred up rebellion in Germany and Italy against Otto and won the support of Philip Augustus of France; and on July 27th, 1214, Otto's power was broken at the battle of Bouvines.

A year later Frederick II was crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle. The Church had raised him to the throne, but he was to be a menace to the Church throughout his stormy life. Pope Honorius, successor to Innocent, was soon fulminating bitterly against the new Emperor. The causes of complaint

by the Holy See were principally two: Frederick had retained Sicily for himself, although he had promised to detach it from the Empire, and he had not kept his vow to serve in a Crusade. The papacy felt that Frederick was becoming too powerful, and Honorius made an alliance with the Guelph cities of Italy against the Ghibelline Emperor. Honorius, who had been Frederick's tutor, was disinclined to go further, but his successor in 1227, Gregory IX, had no compunction in excommunicating Frederick. The Emperor replied by inciting the populace to eject Gregory from Rome. The quarrel was settled in 1230, after Frederick's return from Palestine, but a few years later the Holy See and the Empire were again in dispute. In 1237 Gregory gave his blessing to the Italian cities, which had renewed their struggle against the Empire, and in 1239 Frederick struck at the Pope by intervening in Sardinia, over which the papacy claimed suzerainty. Frederick was excommunicated for the second time, and showed his opinion of the Church by seizing a number of cardinals and bishops.

Gregory died with the contest still undecided, but a compromise seemed probable with the installation of Pope Innocent IV in 1243. The Church and Empire, however, had no faith in each other, and, after long negotiations, the truce between them was broken. In 1245, Innocent, pronouncing Frederick unfit to rule because of his offences against the Church, deposed him in the name of God and called on the people to elect a new Emperor. Frederick fought fiercely for his crown, and on his death, his son, Conrad IV, took up the fight against the Church. The struggle lasted throughout Conrad's reign with varying success, but on balance with the advantage on the side of the Empire. Conrad's infant son, Conradin, was the next Emperor (May, 1254). Manfred, Conradin's uncle, carried on the war against the papacy, and in 1260 made himself master of Italy by a great victory at Montaperti.

Urban IV, elected Pope in the following year, was French, and he sought support in France against Manfred. Charles of Anjou, brother of St. Louis, was promised Sicily if he championed the cause of the Church, and he accepted eagerly. The Guelphs in Italy rallied to Charles against the Ghibelline Manfred, and the victory went to Charles when the two armies met at Benevento in March, 1266. Manfred was killed in the battle, and the Church, which could not forgive its foe even in death, had his grave rifled and his remains buried in obscurity.

Some of the cardinals had become suspicious of the ambitions of Charles of Anjou, but Clement IV, the successor of Urban, had been attached to the court of France, and he put his faith in the French prince. The Church could not afford to antagonise Charles, for another Ghibelline had to be crushed before the triumph of the Church was complete. Manfred had held for himself the Italian territories of the Empire, but he had left his nephew, Conradin, in possession of Germany. Conradin, not yet twenty, entered the lists against Charles, and crossed the Alps with a large army. In August, 1268, he fought Charles at Tagliacozzo, and after a battle lasting all day was utterly routed. Conradin himself, the last of the house of Hohenstaufen, was captured and put to death.

The contest of generations between the Holy See and the Hohenstaufen had ended with what might be claimed as a victory for the Church, but it was a victory for which a heavy price had to be paid. The struggle had emptied the papal coffers and played havoc with all discipline. The prestige of the Holy See had waned dismally; Pope and anti-pope had at times been indistinguishable, at other times the nominee of the Empire had definitely triumphed over the nominee of the Church. Christendom had heard the pontiffs, chased contemptuously from the Eternal City, beseeching the aid of secular princes whom once they had commanded; had seen

popes engaging in chicanery and treachery; had been shocked by spiritual leaders, who, eager to advance the temporal power of the Church, used the weapons of excommunication and interdict frivolously—weapons used so often and so indiscriminately that they had lost half their terror; had watched the great ideal of the holy war perverted into a device of the papacy to punish those who flourished in the face of all spiritual penalties. The Church had emerged from the contest feeble and exhausted. It had humbled the Empire, but the leadership of Christendom had not passed to the Holy See. A French prince and French arms had broken the might of the Empire, and their power was to be felt by the Church. The fight with the Hohenstaufen was finished, but another fight was soon to begin, and from it the Church was to emerge as the abject tool of France.

Clement IV, who had been so enthusiastic a supporter of France, died before he saw the consequences of trusting Charles of Anjou. The Church could not agree upon a successor to Clement. The French cardinals wanted a Frenchman, but the Italian cardinals objected to such a choice, and two years passed before a settlement was reached. The Pope then chosen, Gregory X, had the dream of a great Christian alliance and the end of all wars in Europe, but when he died in 1276 three wars were in progress in Christendom. He left behind him one set of salutary regulations. He had seen the injury done to the Church by the vacancy in the papacy for two years before his own appointment, and he laid down the procedure for future elections. The cardinals were to have the sole right of electing the popes; they were to assemble within ten days of the death of a pontiff and be shut up in a single chamber in the papal palace, cut off from all communication with the world, until they reached a decision. Full meals were to be allowed for the first three days, but if they had not chosen a pope within that time, the food was to be reduced to one dish for the next five days. After the

eight day the cardinals were to starve until they had made their choice.

This procedure was soon neglected, but Clement's immediate successors were nevertheless elected with reasonable despatch. The first reigned for only six months, the next for less than six weeks, and the third not much longer. In June, 1277, Nicholas III occupied the papal throne. He meant to make his house, the Orsini, great in the land, and loaded his relatives with riches and castles, which he seized in the name of the Church. He quarrelled with that champion of the papacy, Charles of Anjou, and on the death of Nicholas three years later, Charles planned to secure the nomination of a French Pope favourable to his designs. Nicholas had raised several of his relatives to the cardinalate and they bitterly opposed the scheme, but after six months of disputation, Charles had his way. A Frenchman, Martin IV, was elected, and showed himself servile to Charles. But the great ambitions of Charles—he wanted to make himself master of Byzantium—were ruined through the Sicilian Vespers. He had been a tyrant in his kingdom of Sicily, and the people of Palermo rose against him, massacring every Frenchman on whom they could lay their hands.

Charles died in February, 1285, and his creature, Martin IV, in the following month. No one seemed to have much interest in the election of the next pope, and Honorius IV was the nominee of no prince. His successor, Nicholas IV, favoured the house of Colonna, which soon rivalled the Orsini in the hierarchy of the Church. During Nicholas's pontificate came the tidings of the expulsion of the Latins from the East, but even in face of this disaster the cardinals could not work amicably, and when they met to elect a new pope in the following year the same bitter disputes broke out. There were two factions, one led by the Orsini, the other by the Colonna. Neither would give

way, and in desperation the cardinalate chose Peter Morrone, a poor peasant who had become a priest but had never held any office of authority in the Church.

Peter Morrone was now an old man. He had withdrawn from the world and wished only to be left in peace to end his days as the leader of a small flock of devoted disciples, by whom he was regarded as a saint. The cardinals, however, had selected him for the highest honour of the Church, and they insisted that the old hermit should wear the tiara. God, they claimed, had called him to be the successor of St. Peter, and he dare not reject the divine command. Peter's pleas were brushed aside, and he was almost forcibly taken from his cave in a mountain fastness and inducted as Pope Celestine V at Naples. He proved utterly incapable. His wits were wandering, he was confused and bewildered, and he had neither the inclination nor the talent to fit himself for the leadership of the Church. Charles, King of Naples—son of Charles of Anjou—dominated the new Pope, and, at his request, Celestine, more than doubled the number of cardinals. Of the thirteen new cardinals appointed by Celestine, seven were Frenchmen and three Neapolitans.

The conclave of cardinals had chosen Celestine because they could not agree on the candidate of the Colonna or of the Orsini, and it was early evident that a worse choice could hardly have been made. A number of the dissatisfied cardinals therefore decided that Celestine must surrender the place to which he had been called. They represented to him that he endangered his immortal soul by mingling with the world, and that his inability to fulfil the functions of the pontiff was so apparent that he would be guilty of a great sin if he did not resign. The most unscrupulous of the cardinals, Benedetto Gaetini, wanted the tiara for himself, and he began a campaign of persecution against the gentle Celestine. It is said, not very credibly, that Gaetini had a hole made secretly in the wall of the Pope's chamber and

spoke through it in the night, representing himself to be a messenger from God and commanding Celestine to abdicate. The French—and particularly Charles of Naples—tried to protect the Pope from whom they had received so many benefits, but Gaetini was too strong and too ingenious. The bewildered Celestine tremblingly announced to the cardinals that he must resign on account of his age, his infirmities, and his unfitness to guide the Church, and the conclave accepted his decision without protest.

Christendom was loud in its condemnation. Many of the priests felt that a bad and dangerous precedent was established by the abdication of a pope, and they pointed out that it was illegal and irregular for a duly elected pontiff to resign his holy office. The conclave of cardinals claimed to have divine guidance in its choice and that divine guidance had presumably led them to Celestine; but what became of such a contention if the man supposedly chosen by divine assistance declared himself unfit for office. Gaetini, however, had no qualms. He was resolved that this time nothing should interfere with his election to the papal chair. The Colonna and the Orsini, however, had again their own candidates, and at first Gaetini was hardly considered to be a serious claimant. As before, the two factions in the conclave could not agree, and when Gaetini put himself forward as a candidate, the Orsini supported him in the hope of keeping the Colonna nominee from success. The Colonna fought fiercely, but Gaetini had gained the interest of Charles of Naples. Nearly half the cardinals were French and took their orders from Charles, and with the backing of the Orsini and the French cardinals, Gaetini was elected Pope. He took the name of Boniface VIII. Christendom had seen a weak Pope in Celestine V, now it was to see in Boniface VIII. a Pope almost unrivalled in boldness, ambition, determination and guile.

Many people still denied that a pope could abdicate from

the Holy See, and, calling Celestine the true pontiff, they regarded Boniface as an impudent imposter. Celestine had sought seclusion from the world on his withdrawal, but he was refused the peace that he craved so humbly. Multitudes sought him out, begging for his blessing, worshipping the holy man who had been removed from office by the wicked and designing Boniface. Celestine was a danger so long as he remained at liberty, and Boniface had no hesitation in seizing and imprisoning his predecessor. According to some chroniclers, Boniface compelled his prisoner to spend his days in a narrow and dismal cell, but other chroniclers affirm that Celestine chose such a cell from humility. While there is disagreement regarding Boniface's responsibility, most chroniclers describe the ex-Pope's cell as so small that Celestine could scarcely lie at length.

Even though a prisoner, Celestine was dangerous, and his death in the spring of 1296 was a relief to Boniface. (There is some suspicion that Boniface murdered his predecessor.) The new Pope had lofty plans. He wanted to make every country acknowledge his dominion over it and to be the single and undisputed master of Christendom. The Emperor, the kings, and the princes were to accept his decisions without question; he was to be the supreme tribunal in temporal as well as spiritual affairs; none was to dare to claim to judge his actions. He commanded Sicily, which had never submitted itself to the house of Anjou, to give allegiance to Charles's son, and when his decree was ignored, he promptly put the Sicilians under interdict (though indeed that sentence did not prevent Sicily from maintaining its rebellion). Against the Colonna he embarked on a war of extermination. That house had opposed his election and still declared that, as Boniface had been chosen while Celestine still lived, the election was invalid. Boniface meant to crush the Colonna for ever. On the ground that they had taken sides with the Sicilians, Boniface, not content with denouncing the surviving

representatives of the family, condemned the Colonna past and present and demanded the surrender of all their territories.

The two members of the house who were cardinals, Jacques and Pierre, were removed from the cardinalate as "diseased sheep". Boniface likened them to the angels who had fallen through pride, and proudly declared that Christendom would see in their destruction a sign that the Holy See knew how to smite its enemies. The Colonna replied by denying that Boniface had any right to the tiara, accusing him of a long series of personal irregularities, of heresy, blasphemy, and other crimes against the faith. The Pope therefore declared their possessions to be the property of the papacy and forbade any member of the house even to the fourth generation to be received into the priesthood. A holy war was declared against the two cardinals, and all who served in it were promised the same privileges as had been given to the Crusaders to the Holy Land. The Orsini, the rivals of the Colonna, were glad of the opportunity to use their arms against the two cardinals, and thousands of others joined the papal army. Castle after castle fell to the soldiers of the Church until at last only one stronghold, Palestrina, remained in the hands of the Colonna. The two cardinals and many of their relatives had taken refuge in Palestrina, which was almost impregnable. Boniface offered to pardon the defenders and spare their property, but he kept neither promise. The castle was demolished in the autumn of 1298 and the deposed cardinals, robbed of their lands and castles and divested of their honours, had to flee for their lives.

To the Empire, Boniface showed himself a harsh master, and the Emperor, Adolph of Nassau, was treated by the Church like a minor princeling. England proved firmer, and Edward I contested Boniface's authority successfully on several occasions, but the most formidable obstacle to

Boniface's vaulting ambition was Philip IV of France. Two years before Boniface's election, Philip the Fair had imposed tithes upon the Church in France to finance his war against England, and in 1296 he proposed a similar tax. Boniface pointed out that the Church could not be taxed without the permission of the Holy See and demanded the withdrawal of the edict, which he denounced as an abuse of the secular power. Philip, however, took another step against the Church. He forbade the exportation of gold or silver without permission, and thus prevented Boniface from receiving the contributions due to the Holy See from the French ecclesiastics. Boniface protested again, but Philip challenged the right of Rome to intervene in the affairs of the kingdom. He could not admit that the priests should be free from taxation imposed for the protection of France, and he denied that the prohibition against the export of money was aimed at the Pope. The quarrel lasted till February, 1297, and ended with a decisive victory for Philip. Boniface professed that he had been misunderstood, and agreed that, if the clergy of France voluntarily consented to pay a tax in exceptional circumstances, the king was entitled to collect it without consulting the Holy See.

Boniface, however, asserted his authority by forcing Philip and Edward I of England to conclude a peace on the terms drafted by him, and before two years had passed his position was strengthened by one of the most extraordinary events in the history of the Church. The turn of the century had always been marked by great religious fervour, but never had Rome received such flocks of penitents as wended their way from every quarter at the end of 1299. The Pope had promised absolution to all who came to the Eternal City for fifteen days and the pilgrims were numbered in hundreds of thousands. They were expected to give generously to the Church and they did not fail. The coffers of the Holy See were replenished beyond calculation. Boniface is said to

have donned the insignia of the Empire before the pilgrims and declared himself to be Cæsar, parading with two swords carried before him in token of the spiritual and temporal powers of the papacy, and calling upon the people to acknowledge the successor of Peter and the Vicar of Christ as the highest authority in Christendom.

Emboldened by the triumph of the jubilee, Boniface returned to his contest with France. Philip the Fair had seized lands belonging to the Church; he had supported Albert of Austria, who had defeated the Emperor, Adolph of Nassau, and, in defiance of the Church, had mounted the throne; and he had shown sympathy with Boniface's great foes, the Colonna. The Pope issued rebukes, then commands, and his tone became violent. He considered that Philip held France only by the grace of the pontiff and he demanded the king's unconditional acceptance of the pretensions of the Church. Open war broke out when Philip seized Bernard Saisset, Bishop of Pamiers, and one of the Pope's closest friends. Saisset, who detested Philip, had spoken against the king on several occasions and was believed to have tried to foment rebellion. At the end of 1301, he was made prisoner, and charged with treason, blasphemy, simony, heresy, fornication, and a long list of other crimes. Philip claimed that Saisset had even dared to call "our holy father Boniface" "a devil incarnate", but Boniface was not impressed with this apparent care for his reputation. He issued Bull after Bull protesting against the seizure of the bishop, and, when these were ignored, he accused Philip of robbing the Church and his subjects. He called the clergy of France to meet him at Rome on November 1st, 1302, to deliberate upon the matters in dispute, and warned Philip not to attempt to interfere with this summons.

Bernard Saisset, the enemy of Philip, had been sent by the Pope to confer with the king; now Philip sent Peter de Flotte, a man in whom he had great confidence but who was

anathema to Boniface, to confer with the Pope. Boniface boasted to Philip's ambassador that he had both spiritual and temporal authority, to which de Flotte cynically replied that authority unsupported by force of arms was of little account and that France was quite content to have temporal power backed by an army. Philip marshalled his kingdom for a contest with the Pope, who, he felt, had betrayed him in refusing to give the imperial crown to Charles of Valois, and whose claims would reduce the French monarchy to impotence. On other occasions Philip had consulted the nobles and clergy of the kingdom, but never had the third estate, the commoners of France, been summoned by their ruler. Now the Estates General were called to Notre Dame in April, 1302, to hear the facts of the dispute. The nobles and commoners assured the king of their support against the Pope, rebuked Boniface for his excesses, affirmed that Philip held his kingdom from God and not from the Holy See, and demanded that the cardinals should discipline Boniface as a menace to Christendom. The clergy assured Philip of their loyalty and their respect for the liberties of the kingdom, but pleaded that they owed a duty to the Holy See and begged permission to attend the council at Rome. Philip, however, bluntly refused.

The cardinals tried to make peace between the Pope and Philip, but Boniface spoke like a seigneur to a serf. "Three kings of France have been deposed by our predecessors", he said, "and, unworthy as we are, we shall depose him (Philip), who has committed as much and more against the Church, unless he amends his conduct towards us". In his famous Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, the Pope violently proclaimed the inferiority of the kings to the pontiff. The Church has one body and one head, not two heads like a monster, he declared, and its ruler is Christ and the Vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter. There are two swords, the spiritual and the temporal, both of which belong to the Church, as is

proved by the Scriptures. The spiritual sword is in the hands of the Pope, the temporal sword is entrusted to the kings, but they may use it only by the command and with the authority of the priesthood. "If the temporal power errs, the spiritual power judges it. To deny this is to assert with the Manicheans two co-equal principles. We therefore declare, command and pronounce that it is a condition of salvation that all human beings should be subject to the Pontiff of Rome."

Boniface had warned the French clergy that they would be deprived of their offices if they did not attend the council, and they hesitated to disobey the summons. But they feared still more the vengeance of Philip, who had threatened that any priest daring to cross the frontier would be mulcted of all his goods. Only a few of the ecclesiastics escaped from France, and Boniface was exasperated at the measures which Philip had taken to prevent the papal command from being obeyed. The king, however, had only begun his campaign against the papacy. In March, 1303, William de Nogaret, the lawyer who had already shown himself a bitter foe of the Holy See, proposed to a French council that Boniface should be arraigned as incompetent to rule the Church. That Church, he said, had been wedded to Celestine V, and Boniface had "committed adultery" in stealing the bride of the late pontiff. At another assembly three months later, the nobles of France begged Philip the Fair to appeal to a general council of the Church against Boniface. De Nogaret had meanwhile drawn up a list of twenty-nine charges against Boniface, whom he accused of black magic, sodomy, heresy, and blasphemy; the Pope was declared to have had dealings with a demon, denied the immortality of the soul, sanctioned fornication, revealed the secrets of the confessional, and even committed murder; he was charged with dissipating the wealth of the Church to enrich his relatives, of ruining the cause of the Holy Land by squandering the funds collected

for a Crusade, of appointing members of his family to great positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, though some of them were married, and of sacrificing the Church in a mad desire to abase the French. Boniface was further reported to have said that a Frenchman had no soul and that he would rather be a dog than a Frenchman!

Copies of this comprehensive indictment were circulated throughout France, and the king's servants pounced upon everyone who ventured to protest. Appeal was made by Philip to the other princes of Christendom to co-operate in summoning a general council of the Church to remove the infamous Boniface from office, but there was little response from them. In France, however, Philip was enthusiastically supported by the Estates General. The nobles and commoners were almost unanimous in their condemnation of the Pope, and over twenty bishops, hundreds of the lesser clergy, and the Visitors of the Temple and Hospital joined in urging that Boniface should be submitted to trial.

The anathema had been launched against Philip the Fair by Boniface in the spring of 1303 (April 13th), and, faced with this bitter enmity throughout France, the Pope announced that on September 8th he would put the whole kingdom under interdict. This was a threat which Philip could not ignore; for the interdict might lead to revolution in France. The king and his ministers consulted, and it was decided that the issue of the interdict must be stopped at all costs. The charge of the affair was given to William de Nogaret. He co-operated with the Colonna, and on the day before that announced for the proclamation of the interdict, de Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna, with a force of 1,600 men, invaded Anagni,¹ where Boniface was in residence. With cries of "Death to Boniface" they

¹ De Nogaret and his men were stationed near Anagni on the excuse of conducting negotiations with Boniface.

rushed towards the papal palace and broke into its private chapel. Boniface, deserted by his cardinals and retainers, showed greatness in defeat. His assailants found the old man of eighty-six dressed in the insignia of the pontiff and bowed before the altar. He was roughly seized and kept prisoner for three days, being subjected to degrading humiliation. To the demands that he should abdicate he calmly replied that, unworthy as he was, he could still die for his faith, and that they could have his life but never his abdication. Sciarra Colonna wanted to put the Pope to the sword, but de Nogaret would not consent. On the fourth day, the people of Anagni rose in defence of the aged Pope and drove the invaders from the town. Boniface was borne in triumph to Rome, but he never recovered from the shock of the attack. He died four weeks later (October 11th). According to legend, his mind had gone and he killed himself by dashing his head against the walls of his chamber.

His successor, Nicholas Bocasini, was elected ten days later and took the name of Benedict XI. He was prepared to be conciliatory towards France, and Philip, who felt that he had perhaps gone rather far in seizing Boniface and plundering the papal treasures, appeared at first to be ready to make peace. When, however, Benedict gave some concessions, Philip was encouraged to ask for greater ones, and he assumed a bullying tone towards the Holy See when they were not immediately granted. He insisted that a general council of the Church should be called to adjudicate upon the accusations laid against the dead Pope. Shocked that Philip should venture to put forward so outrageous a proposal, Benedict issued in July, 1304, a severe condemnation of all who had played any part in the attack on Boniface. It seemed that Benedict might prove as stern an opponent of Philip as Boniface had been, but the Pope's days were numbered. A few weeks after the publication of the condemnation of the attack on Anagni, Benedict died—some of the chroniclers claim that

he was a victim of poison administered by the creatures of Philip the Fair.

Whether or not Philip was responsible for Benedict's death, the vacancy in the Holy See at this time suited the king's plans excellently. He had fought bitterly against Boniface, had been on the verge of a struggle with Benedict, and was determined that the next pope should not interfere with his plans. The cardinals in the conclave were, as usual, divided into the one led by the Colonna, favourable to France, and one led by the Orsini, favourable to the policy pursued by Boniface. After discussions lasting nearly a year it was decided to make the choice outside the ranks of the cardinalate, and one of the candidates put forward was Bernard de Goth, Archbishop of Bordeaux. He had been a staunch supporter of Boniface and had played an important part against Philip. Such a man was therefore acceptable to those members of the conclave antagonistic to France, but he could be elected only by the support of the cardinals controlled by Philip and no one believed that the French king would support a nominee who had been so prominent a figure on the side of the papacy.

Philip, however, knew Bernard de Goth, knew that the archbishop craved power and wealth and honours. Medieval chroniclers tell of a secret meeting between Bernard and Philip the Fair in a ruined abbey and describe how Philip tempted Bernard with the promise of the papal chair. "I will make you Pope", the king is alleged to have said, "if you promise to abide by six conditions." Bernard could not resist the tremendous prize and swore to fulfil the king's commands. But once Bernard was raised to the Holy See he could absolve himself from an oath, and Philip was not satisfied until Bernard had sworn on the Host and had given his brothers and two of his nephews into the king's keeping as hostages. Actually, however, Philip and Bernard did not meet until after the election, and the king left the arrangements to his emissaries. Bernard undertook faithfully to

comply with the conditions dictated to him by the French, and to advance Philip's schemes so far as his position permitted. The six conditions were a complete reconciliation between Philip and the Church, the absolution of everyone who had fought against Boniface, the surrender to Philip of the right to tax the French clergy one-tenth of their revenues for a period of five years, the erasure of the Bulls of Boniface from the papal records and the condemnation of that Pope, and the reinstatement of the two Colonna to the cardinalate and their former honours. Philip's sixth condition was not specified, and Bernard was told that it would be explained later. What other favour Philip wanted from Bernard has remained a mystery to this day, but it is possible that the king had in mind the persecution of the Templars.

After the bargain had been made with Philip the Fair, the conclave unanimously elected Bernard de Goth as Pope. He was installed on November 14th, 1305, and took the name of Clement V. Less than seven months later he sent his summons to the Grand Master of the Temple, at Cyprus, and Jacques de Molay set out for France.

CHAPTER XV

THE ARREST OF THE TEMPLARS IN FRANCE

CLEMENT had summoned the Grand Masters of both the Temple and the Hospital, but Jules de Villaret, Grand Master of the Hospital, excused himself from coming to France. The Hospitallers were, he said, at a critical point in their siege of Rhodes, and he could not leave his followers. Jacques de Molay, however, had no such excuse to offer, nor did he see any reason why he should seek an excuse. Although the Pope had told him to come secretly and with a small retinue, de Molay set out in state with sixty knights and the accumulated wealth of the Temple which had been stored at Cyprus. He reached Marseilles at the beginning of 1307 and began a slow and magnificent progress to Paris. Twelve horses were required to carry the stores of gold and silver alone, apart from the train on which was loaded rich equipment and sumptuous apparel. Before seeing the Pope, de Molay deposited these treasures in the Temple at Paris and had an interview with Philip the Fair. The king received him with honour, and gave de Molay no reason to suspect the plot that was being hatched against the Order.

After his interview with the king, the Grand Master went to pay his respects to the Pope. Clement was then at Poitiers. Philip did not mean to let the Pope out of his clutches, and, even if Rome had not been closed to Clement owing to rioting by the populace, the king would have insisted that Clement should maintain the papal court within reach of the royal court. The coronation had taken place on November 14th, 1303, at the Church of St. Just in Lyons, and the rest of

Clement's life was to be spent under the eye of the French. His successors for three-quarters of a century were likewise to be prisoners at Avignon—the so-called Babylonian captivity.

The Pope had written to Jacques de Molay: "We desire to consult you regarding a Crusade in co-operation with the Kings of Armenia and Cyprus, because you are in the best position to give us useful advice on the subject and, next to the Court of Rome, you above all others must be interested in the project". Christendom had demanded that something should be done to recover the Latin kingdom in the East, but, though many plans had been made, all proved stillborn. Clement was nevertheless hopeful of the issue of an expedition by Armenia and Cyprus, but de Molay submitted a memorandum in which he criticised the proposed Crusade as foredoomed to failure. He pointed out that the Armenians were unreliable and that the King of Cyprus would be able to provide only a small army. Cyprus should certainly be used as a base, but the one chance of regaining the Holy Land was by a great expedition from the West.

De Molay was also asked to consider the question of an amalgamation between the Temple and the Hospital. This was not a new proposal. St. Louis and the Popes Gregory X, Nicholas IV, and Boniface VIII had tried to impose such a combination, but the Grand Masters of both Orders had always opposed a fusion. Jacques de Molay followed the example of his predecessors and dismissed the idea of a combination as highly undesirable. In a written statement he recalled the earlier proposals and reminded Clement that good and sufficient reasons had been given against an alliance of the fighting monks. The Orders had, he declared, performed valuable services as separate organisations, and to compel them to combine would be a reflection upon their work. The Orders were not only military: they were spiritual and "it would be harsh and unfair to make a man

who, of his own free will, has vowed himself to one Order change his manner of life and enter another Order that he has not chosen". Innovations were often dangerous, and it was wrong to assume that because a thing was untried it was necessarily desirable. Jealousy, said de Molay, would be a certain result of a combination. He charged the Hospital with caring only to amass wealth, while the Temple was generous with its money in charitable works. Moreover, the Templars, according to de Molay, were richer and more renowned than the Hospitallers, and discord would break out between the two Orders on these points. "At the instigation of the devil" the members of the Temple and the Hospital would be tempted to boast that their own Order was the better, and, being men of war, they would perhaps turn their arms against each other to prove their strength. If the Orders were united the amount given in charity would be reduced. Further, where at present poor pilgrims had the choice of the houses of the Templars and Hospitallers they would be limited to a single house, for in places where the Orders each had its own house, one or other would have to be closed. This would cause the displacement of a number of commanders of houses, and trouble would arise on this ground. Who were to obtain the chief posts of a united Order? For instance, the Temple and the Hospital each had a Marshal, but a combination of the Orders would provide for a single Marshal. Naturally, each Order would prefer its own nominees. Suppose, too, the man elected to the post of Marshal in the new organisation was of Temple origin, he would be inclined to favour the ex-Templars, and the discussion and squabbling would be endless. A combined Order might be stronger, yet it could still be less effective than the existing arrangement.

He admitted the rivalry between the Templars and the Hospitallers, but denied that it was disadvantageous to the Christians; he argued that on the contrary it was a healthy

rivalry, disadvantageous only to the Saracens. If the Hospital performed any notable feat against the Moslems, said de Molay, the Templars never rested until they had distinguished themselves at least equally. Such competition had always existed and still existed, and it would be a dire misfortune if it disappeared. The praiseworthy rivalry between the Orders had not taken any form other than a desire to outshine the other in fame and reputation, and de Molay professed never to have heard that the Templars and Hospitallers had come to blows! The proposal had only two recommendations in his eyes: the first was that the united Order would be so powerful that no secular prince would dare to interfere with it; the second that economies could be made in administration.

The statement is very feeble and unconvincing, but de Molay believed Clement to be entirely satisfied. It was foolish to confess that the brethren were so unruly and ill-disciplined that they would oppose an amalgamation because of petty jealousy, that they would fight bitterly over appointments, would disobey the Pope and their leaders, and turn their arms against each other. Had the Grand Master shown himself favourable towards an alliance, it is possible—though highly improbable—that the persecution of the Templars might have been avoided. Philip the Fair had once thought of combining the two Orders in one great organisation, to be called the Order of the Knights, with himself as Grand Master and a provision that all future Grand Masters should be princes of the ruling house of France. Even had Philip still wished such a combination, de Molay's opposition would have ruined the scheme.

Peter Dubois, a lawyer who must rank high among medieval publicists, had worked out a scheme for using the possessions of the Temple and Hospital in Christendom. The military Orders, Dubois argued, had no place in Europe; their duty was to fight the Saracens and they did

not require lands and houses in France and other Christian countries for that purpose. He would give the brethren an income to carry on the struggle against Islam, and would turn the preceptories and commanderies of the Orders into schools where children, especially the children of men who had lost their lives in fighting the Moslems, would be instructed in the arts or in trades. Philip the Fair agreed that the possessions of the Temple should be seized, but he meant to use them for purposes other than educational ones.

He was always in want of money. When he mounted the throne, he found France almost bankrupt and his expensive wars with England and Flanders had further weakened the finances of the kingdom. His first collision with the Holy See had been over the question of money, but the right to tax the Church was not enough. He took the gold and silver vessels of his barons at a fraction of their value and melted them in his mint. He robbed the Lombards; he seized all the Jews in the kingdom, forced them to give nearly the whole of their fortunes to save their lives, then expelled them, their business being transferred, for a consideration, to Italian bankers who were deep in Philip's confidence; and he imposed levies on trade and property which had previously been unknown. His principal means of raising funds, however, was to debase the currency, and he did it so often that in ten years the franc had depreciated to less than half of its value—Pope Boniface had complained bitterly against the practice, calling on Philip "no longer to blind himself to the iniquity" of such actions. In June, 1306, Paris had risen against the king who debased the currency so often and so heavily, and to escape the fury of the mob Philip had been compelled to take refuge behind the strong walls of the Temple in Paris for three days.

The king wanted territory as well as money. He had robbed many of his nobles of their land, but the estates of the barons had been considerably reduced long before he was

elevated to the throne. Their lands had been sold to finance conflicts among themselves and with earlier kings of France, and, especially at the time of the First Crusade, to raise money for expeditions to the Holy Land. Much of the property hitherto held by nobles was now in the possession of the Church. Some of Philip's predecessors had been alarmed by the extent of the Church's lands in France and had tried to prevent the transfer of properties, and Philip himself had forbidden gifts of land to the Church. But at the beginning of the fourteenth century a third—some chroniclers say a half—of France was in the hands of the ecclesiastics.

Money and land, enough to satisfy even Philip, were in the possession of the military Orders. The Temple had acquired its wealth not only through its banking and financial operations and the gifts of the kings and barons and pilgrims, but through careful administration of the properties bequeathed to it or bought at times when purchasers were few and prices low. A lord might squander his patrimony in a year or two, ruin it through mismanagement or burden it with the expenses of war, but the Temple was free from such embarrassments. Only rarely did the Temple sell land; no dignitary, however high his place in the Order, could himself alienate any territory of the Temple. Some great officers lived extravagantly, but the number of great officers was small compared with the resources of the Order, and a check was maintained upon spendthrifts by the Grand Master, the Visitors, and the chapters. The cost of the war in the East was in latter days easily financed out of income, and seldom were the brethren involved in a war in Europe. The operations of the Temple were on a grand scale; it had a wide choice of men to whom to entrust the work of administration, and its territories were skilfully and on the whole economically managed. A lord had to pay tithes and taxes, but, except on rare occasions, the Temple was excluded from

all levies either by the Church or the State. The Temple also had the advantage that, as its lands were vested in the Order, it did not suffer from the operation of the law by which the suzerain could take the lands of a man who died without an heir. A number of lords whose possessions would in normal course have reverted to Philip had prevented their estates from falling into the hands of the king by enrolling in the Temple in the latter years of their life.

Philip had usually ignored the nobles and the ecclesiastics when choosing his ministers and advisers, and had recruited them from among the bourgeois. These counsellors had done him good service and they wanted to be ennobled as a reward. A nobleman must have land, and Philip was anxious to endow his middle-class advisers with property, both to ensure their loyalty to him and to weaken the old-established nobility, with whom he had fought on several occasions. The king would have liked to seize the lands of the Church proper, but he dared not yet take such a step. By crushing the Temple, however, he would strike at the Church, would refill his treasury, and have ample lands for his trusted ministers. Anything that would weaken the Church was attractive to Philip. He dreamed of ruling over the Empire of Charlemagne, and he knew that the Church would be the greatest obstacle to this ambition. His policy therefore was to humble the prestige of the papacy. The Temple, the Hospital, and the Teutonic Knights were a permanent army at the disposal of the Popes, and all three might be organised against France at the command of the Pope.

That was enough to make Philip dislike the military Orders, but he had other reasons for his antagonism. Many of his subjects were enrolling in, or putting themselves under the protection of, the Temple or the Hospital to escape the military and civil duties which, obligatory on everyone else, were not required of the brethren. Moreover, practically

every noble house in France had a representative in one of the Orders, and the king wanted to remove the risk of a dangerous alliance between the brethren and the lords. Philip had no need to fear the Teutonic Knights; they recruited almost exclusively in the Empire and were relatively few in number. The Temple and the Hospital, however, were both dangerous to him. The Hospitallers were fighting in the Mediterranean and were for the present out of the way; but the Grand Master of the Temple and a third of the personnel of the Order were on French soil, and there were other factors which made the Templars peculiarly vulnerable to attack.

The extent of the feeling against the Templars as responsible for the loss of the Holy Land has been grossly exaggerated, but there was considerable criticism of the military Orders for failing to beat back the Moslems. The Hospitallers shared with the Temple much of the blame for the reverses in the East, but since the fall of Acre the Hospital had shown greater energy than the Temple in the war against Islam. The impression had gained ground that the Temple was more interested in its financial operations than in the fight against Islam, and Christendom had long thought it a scandal that so many Templars should be resident in Europe when the Franks in the Holy Land were in such dire peril. The Temple made large profits from its banking functions, but when people saw the many and rich establishments of the Order, they tended to look upon them as maintained from the money contributed by the faithful for the holy war. The future of the Order was a subject of much discussion, and it was rumoured that de Molay had brought all the wealth of the Temple to Paris and intended to make no further expeditions against the Moslems.

Philip believed—or affected to believe—that the Temple had fomented the riots in Paris against him, but although the Order had suffered heavily from the king's frequent

interference with the currency, there is no evidence that it had any part in the rebellion. The king had, however, seen the strength of the Temple in Paris when forced to seek shelter in it, and had been impressed by the measures taken to defend the fortress against the mob. The great tower of the Parisian Temple, built early in the thirteenth century and situated opposite the Louvre, had always been obnoxious to Philip, and he bitterly resented the right of the Order to high, middle and low justice which interfered with his authority in his own capital as well as reduced his revenues. He knew that the Templars had fought in Italy against Frederick II and taken part in other contests at the command of the Pope; and he also knew that the brethren had in 1298 fought against Scotland on the side of the King of England and had intervened in other struggles in which the Church was only indirectly involved. Philip may therefore have feared that the Temple would combine against him, not only if so ordered by the Holy See, but even if bribed by a foreign prince.

It is probable that Philip sincerely believed that the Templars aimed at the establishment of a kingdom for themselves in Christendom. The Teutonic Knights were winning a territory in Prussia from the pagans; the Hospitallers were wresting the island of Rhodes from the Moslems; but against whom would the power of the Temple be used? The Temple was strongest in France and closely associated with the French nobility, and it might attempt to overthrow the monarchy. There is not the slightest indication that the Templars had any such ambition; but the suspicious Philip may have thought that the Templars, who had been almost self-governing in the East, would hanker after a kingdom of their own and that it would be his kingdom. The Order had no more than five thousand members in France, of whom only about a tenth were knights, but the organisation was international and the brethren stood together. In all the

Temple had over fifteen thousand men, the best trained and best equipped army in Christendom.

Even, however, if the Order was innocent of any design to attack a Christian kingdom and meant to live peaceably on its great possessions, Philip believed that it might be dangerous. He could endure no rival in France, and the Temple, almost entirely withdrawn from his control, would always be in a position to challenge him. He had mounted the throne at the age of seventeen and had shown himself insanely jealous and merciless to those who might, in circumstances however remote, be able to defy his authority. He was a king who could wait for his vengeance. Years might pass before his arrangements were complete, but when Philip swooped down on his enemies he made no mistake. He was completely ruthless, and hesitated at no cruelty to attain his ends. Human suffering appeared to affect him not at all. A bishop describes him as neither a man, nor a beast, but a statue, and he was certainly as unfeeling as a block of marble in his persecution of the Templars. Their form of government was anathema to him. Philip believed in hereditary rulers and distrusted an institution which at least in theory was run on democratic lines. It had a tradition of freedom, prided itself on its international connections, taught its members to regard themselves as superior to all secular powers, and acknowledged no leader but the Pope and the Grand Master. The suggestion has been made that Philip was bitter against the Temple because of the part it played in the struggle with Boniface, but the Visitor of the Temple had supported the appeal to a general council against Boniface, and Philip had acknowledged the loyalty of the Order to him in the contest.

The three principal reasons for Philip's determination to crush the Temple were greed for money, hatred of the Church, and fear of the might of the fighting monks. He had a personal grievance against it, for in 1304 he had been

refused honorary membership on the excuse that the Rule forbade the acceptance of a king, although he knew that other rulers had been received. The Temple had lent him money on several occasions, notably for the dowry of his sister, Blanche, and his daughter, Isabella; but Philip would not have embarked on the campaign against the Order merely to cancel a debt or revenge himself for an insult. To crush the Temple was a tremendous undertaking, one which might involve his kingdom in civil war, and Philip had carefully considered the risks and the rewards. He would be attacking the Church, but he was confident that he could depend upon the support of the ecclesiastics in his project. He had bent the Church in France to his will several times and he had no fear that it would oppose him now. For in every country in Christendom the clergy resented the privileges granted to the Temple by the papacy. The bishops had protested frequently against the withdrawal of the Order from their jurisdiction, had watched with envy the growth in wealth of the Templars, and had felt that the bequests made to the Order should have been given to the regular clergy. Friction was almost constant in the dioceses, and the Templars flaunted their independence of everyone except the Pope and treated the ecclesiastical authorities insolently. While therefore Philip realised that the clergy might defend the Templars as servants of the Church, he considered it much more probable that their jealousy of the Order would make them acquiesce in its destruction.

But Philip could not condemn the Temple. It had been approved by the Pope, and only the Pope or a general council of the Church could abolish it. Nothing less than its abolition would satisfy the king, for if the Order was permitted to continue in any form, there could be no question of seizing its possessions. It was true that Clement V owed his elevation to Philip, but he would hesitate to act against the Templars without good reason. Besides, even if

Clement were agreeable, so strong and firmly entrenched an Order could not be destroyed unless it had first been discredited in the eyes of Christendom. Philip's confidential advisers, William de Nogaret, William de Plasian, and Enguerrand de Marigny worked out a plan of campaign. The age of the lawyers was beginning in France. The law had hitherto been largely the affair of the Church, but there was now emerging a new class of men, who challenged the ecclesiastical influence. These lawyers set up the old Roman law as the civil law of the land and drove the clergy from the courts. In the lawyers, the monarchy found its best champions against the Church; their aim was to make the royal prerogative supreme by crushing the authority of the barons and enfeebling the papal power. Canon law alone was to be reserved to the Church; from all else the ecclesiastics were excluded. The destruction of the Temple would be an unprecedented blow at the authority of the Church, and Philip's advisers were enthusiastic for the attack, especially when they saw the chance to force the papacy to condemn its own army.

For at least forty years, there had been rumours of immorality and heretical practices among the Templars; but such rumours were common enough about every religious organisation. The Hospital, for example, had been accused by Pope Gregory IX of immorality and treachery, and similar charges were made against the Teutonic Knights as well as the regular fraternities, such as the Franciscans. Philip realised how the talk of scandalous practices in the Temple could be turned to account. Definite accusations had been made against the Order in 1305, though the circumstances in which they were put forward are in some doubt. The most reliable story seems to be that Sequin de Florian, a man eager to enrich himself, made a statement to James II of Aragon, accusing the Templars of the most horrible blasphemies and the most disgusting atrocities, and declared that his informa-

tion came from members of the Order. James was not much impressed, but the news reached the ears of the French ministers and Sequin de Florian was carefully examined and, in return for a heavy bribe, made a detailed statement on oath. Philip is said to have introduced spies into the Temple to obtain confirmation of the charges; but, if so, his minions were completely unsuccessful in gathering evidence which could be used against the fraternity.

Although the statement was not made public, news of irregularities among the Templars spread quickly—perhaps by the king's instructions; and when Jacques de Molay reached France at the beginning of 1307 he soon heard of the charges. De Molay was alarmed. He denied that there was the slightest truth in the accusations and urged that, in justice to the Order, Clement should authorise an investigation. The Pope assured de Molay that he put no credence in the rumours, and the Grand Master, apparently quite content with the words of the pontiff, returned to Paris, where he was entertained by Philip and took his place among the first men of the kingdom.

Before the autumn of 1307, Philip had made all his arrangements for proceeding against the Temple. His ministers drew up an indictment in which they specified a number of the charges against the Order, and a copy was sent to the Pope with a demand for an investigation. Clement at first would take no steps, but Philip pressed the matter and cracked the whip over his tool in the papal chair. Since his election, Clement had complied with most of the conditions imposed by the king. He had accepted Philip into the bosom of the Church once more; had cancelled several of the Bulls of Boniface to which Philip objected; had restored the two Colonna to their former honours and appointed a number of French priests to the cardinalate; and had allowed the king to take the tithes of the Church in France for five years. But there remained another condition—the

condemnation of Boniface. Clement shuddered at such a tremendous deed against the memory of a former Pope and tried desperately to temporise.

Clement had also failed to bestow the imperial crown on Philip's brother, and the king became more and more impatient at such opposition. He insisted that Clement should condemn Boniface, grant the imperial crown according to the wishes of France, and investigate the charges against the Temple. In the hope of avoiding the first two demands, Clement consented to the last, and assured Philip that he would make a searching investigation. But he gave way only after several protests and at least one stormy interview with Philip. Clement characterised the charges as so fantastic that it was foolish to take them seriously, and, although the Grand Master had also pressed for an enquiry, Clement was most reluctant to agree. Even in the letter of August 24th, 1307, promising to undertake an investigation, the Pope wrote, "There is so much that seems impossible (in the indictment) that we cannot believe it". After consultation with the cardinals, however, he had resolved to examine the accusations, if Philip insisted, but Clement pleaded with Philip not to insist.

The king had obtained what he wanted—the Pope's promise to investigate the charges, and, by implication, the admission that a *prima facie* case for an enquiry had been established. Philip, however, had now no intention, and almost certainly never at any time had the intention, of allowing Clement to dictate the form of the enquiry. A papal investigation during which the Templars were at liberty, able to employ advocates, use their great resources to collect evidence and bring witnesses would, he felt, almost certainly result in the acquittal of the Order. He did not mean the Pope to pronounce judgment upon the Order until French propagandists had convinced the people that the Templars were guilty of terrible crimes and that the Order must be

abolished. Philip could not afford to fail. The Templars were as yet unaware of the exact charges brought before the Pope, but it was common knowledge that the king had been launching terrible accusations. If therefore the Templars were pronounced to be guiltless and the Order survived, Philip would be an object of bitter enmity to the brethren. His kingdom might be the price of an unsuccessful attack on the Temple.

The king therefore was determined that the Order should be condemned beyond any possibility of doubt. Although Clement had authorised an investigation, Philip claimed that it was impossible to wait until an ecclesiastical tribunal had been summoned. The Templars, said Philip, knowing of the enquiry that was about to be made, had secretly planned to take to arms and defy the Pope and the princes of Christendom. There is not the slightest evidence that the Templars ever considered such a step; they had agreed to an enquiry by the Church and everything shows that they would have welcomed the chance to defend themselves before the Pope and put an end to the rumours of their misconduct. Philip, however, wanted an investigation controlled by himself and in which the Templars were helpless to make any effective defence, and he had already determined to seize and imprison every Templar in the land and possess himself of all their goods.

Philip was well served throughout his reign, and never better than in the affair of the Temple. The charge of the proceedings was given to de Nogaret, and on September 14th sealed instructions were despatched from the monastery of Maubuisson, where Philip was in residence, to the royal seneschals and other trusted officers throughout the kingdom. The seneschals were ordered to provide themselves with a strong force of men four weeks later to carry out a task which might be dangerous. The purpose of this armed force was explained in a sealed enclosure which the seneschals were

forbidden to open, under pain of death, until October 12th. On the following day, they were to imprison the Templars, seize the goods of the Order, making an inventory of the possessions of the brethren and holding everything on which they could lay their hands at the disposal of the king.

The sealed instructions to the seneschals were in the form of a strange letter, which reads as if it had been drawn up by a man labouring under an obsession. People on whom he placed credence, said Philip, had reported to him a thing so terrible, deplorable, monstrous, and abominable, a thing so absolutely inhuman and so wholly disgusting that he had been shaken by a violent horror. It was something quite bestial, worse even than bestial; it related to God and our salvation; and it had been almost impossible for the king to believe that any persons should be so depraved as to engage in the atrocious crimes which were the subject of the complaint. The charges, Philip went on, showed that the Templars were wolves in sheep's clothing, men who insulted religion, crucified Christ a second time, a crucifixion more awful than that borne by the Saviour on the cross. When a brother entered the Order, he had to spit on the crucifix and deny Christ three times; then the new member had to take off his secular clothing and, naked, exchange obscene kisses with the Templar by whom he was received into the Order, "in accordance with the scandalous practice of their Order, first at the base of the spine, then on the navel, and lastly on the mouth". The Templars had also to agree to unnatural relations with other members and, instead of worshipping God, they worshipped an idol.

Such unheard of infamy, proceeded Philip, had aroused his suspicion, and he had thought that the accusers were perhaps actuated by greed or jealousy rather than by zeal for the holy faith; but the weight of the evidence led him to the strong presumption that the charges were well founded. He had consulted the Pope, the clergy, the barons and the head

of the Inquisition in France (William Imbert of Paris) on the best means of ascertaining the truth, and the more deeply the charges were investigated by all concerned, the more serious did the position appear to him and his advisers. He claimed that he had a special duty to protect the faith from such corruption, and that, in view of the terrible nature of the accusations and in order to save the innocent as well as punish the guilty, he had decided, with the agreement of the Pope, to take action without delay.

Every preceptory of the Temple in France was to be raided on Friday, October 13th, and all Templars kept under strong guard. The arrested members were then to be carefully examined. First they were to be told that the Pope and the king had been advised by reliable witnesses of the shameful irregularities in the Order, especially at the time when members made their first professions to it. The Templars were to be told that those who confessed their crimes would be treated leniently while those who obstinately denied the degrading ceremonies of admission would be condemned to death. In the letter of September 14th and a later letter under the king's seal the charges are set out in great detail. In addition to denying Christ, spitting on the cross thrice, and engaging in—or receiving permission to engage in—homosexual practices, the Templars are accused of wearing day and night a girdle which had been placed round the neck of an idol. This idol is described as being “in the form of the head of a man with a long beard”, but the statement explains that the idol is not known to all the brethren, only to the more important officers and a number of trusted members. The seneschals are instructed to examine every Templar diligently on these points, and ensure that a copy of the depositions is forwarded to the king. Torture is to be employed to force confessions from the obstinate.

The wholesale arrest of the Templars went through without the slightest hitch. By the evening of October 13th

almost every Templar in France was under lock and key in royal prisons—only a few hundred managed to escape. Few secrets have been so well kept, and the Templars appear to have had no suspicion of the nature of the king's orders or even that any orders at all had been issued concerning them. Philip had built up an effective police force and had used it to crush the Jews and the Lombards and to stop all opposition to his will during the contest with Pope Boniface; but this was the triumph of his organisation. It was a remarkable achievement to seize five thousand trained warriors in every corner of France on the same day.

No Templar was too great, none too insignificant to be spared. Jacques de Molay, a number of the other great officers of the Order and sixty knights were arrested in the Temple of Paris. The Grand Master believed himself to be high in the confidence of Philip. He had acted as godfather to one of the king's sons, Robert (thereby breaking the Rule of the Order which forbade any brother to be a godfather), and on the previous day he had been chosen as a pallbearer at the funeral of the king's sister, Blanche, wife of the Count of Valois. De Nogaret himself superintended the arrest of de Molay and the other Templars in Paris, about one hundred and forty in all. Accompanied by a strong body of men, he forced the gates of the Temple and seized everyone within it. None of the Templars either at Paris or any other centre attempted to resist. They may have wished to show their peaceable intentions by submitting to arrest, for, although the attack was so sudden, it seems probable that some of the preceptories could have put up a fight. The brethren may have felt safe in their innocence, or thought that, whether guilty or not, the Church would rally to their aid. If so, they had miscalculated the power, the ingenuity, and the unscrupulousness of Philip the Fair.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TEMPLARS AND THE INQUISITORS

THERE was absolute bewilderment when the news of the arrest of the Templars spread abroad, and an uproar broke out in Paris. Many people had known of the vague charges launched against the Order, but such charges had been made against practically every religious institution, and the power and wealth of the Temple and its special relation and its services to the papacy seemed to raise it above all aggression. Complaints against the Templars had been common enough. The Order was criticised for its cupidity, arrogance, greed and extravagance and there was a belief that its financial houses had bought up corn on many occasions and sold it at high prices in times of famine. The brethren were reputed to be great swearers and great drinkers; *boire comme un templier* and *jurer comme un templier* are heard in France in our own time.

But though people complained bitterly of the faults and excesses of the fighting monks, they respected the members of the Temple for the great services that the Order had rendered in the Holy Land. The Templars might not have fought Islam with the skill and energy that Christendom expected of them, yet to the very last mighty deeds had been associated with the name of the Order. The brethren had inherited a high tradition, and it was difficult to believe in the total unworthiness of the successors of those renowned warriors who had protected Jerusalem against hordes of Moslems, almost impossible to think that the whole Order was rotten with iniquity and heresy, and that the other fantastic accusations

were well-founded. The ambition and selfishness of Philip the Fair made all his doings suspect, and the people were inclined to favour the Templars against the king.

Philip claimed to have arrested the Templars with the consent of the Pope, but Clement had agreed only to investigate the Order, and the king knew that his position was vulnerable. He hastened to forestall the criticism that he had acted irregularly. On the day after the imprisonment of the brethren (Saturday, October 14th), the clergy of Notre Dame were summoned to hear the charges against the Order, and they obediently reported that their sovereign was amply justified. The propaganda machine of Philip the Fair began to work at full pressure, and it was an extremely efficient instrument. The Franciscans and the Dominicans were the king's propagandists, and on the same day they opened their campaign by addressing huge audiences in the Palais Royal and elsewhere. The theme of the preachers' discourse was not a denial that Philip wanted to possess himself of the goods of the Temple and break an Order which might threaten him; for while some people perhaps guessed that this was so, Philip did not want the idea to be put into the heads of others, even if he had considered that subjects had the right to think such things of their monarch. The mission of the preachers was to blacken the character of the Templars, convince the regular clergy and the people that the brethren were guilty of the foulest crimes, and stir up indignation against men who were furiously denounced as idolators, monsters of iniquity, betrayers of Christ, devotees of obscenities, and treacherous to the cause of Christendom in the Holy Land.

Royal proclamations published throughout France specified some of the enormities charged against the brethren and explained that the king had arrested the Templars "at the request of our brother in Christ, William of Paris, Inquisitor of the heresy, who has begged for the assistance of the secular power to stamp out the heretics and idolators". The people

were led to believe that the prisoners had been handed over to the Inquisition. Actually, however, the seneschals and other royal agents were ordered by Philip to conduct the primary examination of the Templars themselves, and only afterwards to hand them over to the Inquisition. William Imbert, the chief of the Inquisition in France, was also the king's confessor and one of Philip's most servile tools. Before the arrest of the Templars, William had sent instructions to the Dominicans who served the Inquisition throughout France. The Inquisitors had shown themselves pitiless in their examinations of other prisoners, but William of Paris thought it necessary to warn them to adopt special measures with the Templars. Every kind of torture was to be employed unsparingly by the most expert torturers of the day to extract confessions from prisoners who had previously been ill-treated by the royal officers.

Copies of the confessions thus obtained were given to the Franciscans. Throughout the kingdom they carried the tale of terrible crimes committed by the Templars, giving particulars of what they called the proven enormities and hinting at others too shameful to mention. They had no opposition. The Templars were in prison dungeons, cut off from the world, and anyone who dared to say a word in their defence drew down upon himself the wrath of the king's men. Philip had not condemned the Order, the friars insisted, nor would he attempt to judge it, for he had too much respect for the rights of the Church to interfere with a religious institution. The friars declared that Philip had done a noble work for Christendom in seizing the Templars and praised him for his zeal in protecting the purity of the faith. By proclamations, by public addresses, and by a campaign of whispers the people were assured of the guilt of the brethren, and a case was skilfully manufactured against men who had been stripped of all their authority and divested of their lands and possessions and everything on which they had hitherto relied.

The people might not be satisfied of the guilt of the Order, but the propaganda convinced them that an investigation to determine the truth was overdue. Pope Clement had in fact authorised an enquiry, the people were reminded, and Philip had done no more than assist the Holy See by preventing the Templars in France from taking to arms or escaping back to Cyprus. The investigation, it was emphasised, would be conducted by the Church—by the Inquisition, expressly created by the papacy to examine charges against the holy faith. The old scandals about the Temple were recalled, especially those about the Rule and the chapters. The Rule of the Order was a most mysterious document, known in its complete form only to about a score of the great officers, the chapters of the Temple were strictly guarded and, before the proceedings opened, a search was made for interlopers. What is secret must ever be an object of suspicion to the populace, and imagination conceived the Rule as containing monstrous provisions, and the chapters as assemblies of debauchees.

Philip also played his game astutely with the nobles. He represented to them that their taxation had been heavy because the Temple was free from levies by the Church and the State, and he let it be understood that the burden of the secular estates would be lightened. Appeal was made to the cupidity of the barons and their jealousy of the privileges of the Order. Many of the lords had borrowed from the Temple, and the king cleverly inculcated the idea that these debts would be wiped out if the Order were abolished. But his principal weapon was fear. The power of the monarchy had been shown by the success of the attack, and the nobles were afraid to challenge a king who had overcome so great an institution as the Temple with such speed and ease. And as the Templars were theoretically in the hands of the Inquisition any interference by the nobles would be rebellion against the Church as well as the State.

The indictment against the Temple rested on statements made by unreliable witnesses and a plentiful crop of rumours, and Philip realised that the accusations could not be sustained on such flimsy evidence. He may have sincerely believed the Temple to be guilty of some of the charges, but he can hardly have believed in a number of the more absurd accusations. He was, however, not concerned to establish the truth, and would doubtless have acted in the same way if he had regarded the Order as wholly innocent or wholly guilty. William Imbert had instructed his inquisitors that they must not proceed against the Order (only against the Templars as individuals), but he was probably aware of the king's ultimate aim. Philip meant to secure the abolition of the Temple and seize its possessions for his own use, and his one hope of forcing the Church to condemn the Order was to make the Templars confess to crimes against the faith. It would not help Philip to prove that a number of the Templars were heretics or traitors or debauchees, for the Church could cast out the offenders, and the Order, perhaps reconstituted, would still retain its lands and wealth. Philip's plan was to show that the whole Order was a heretical institution, and that by its secret statutes every member was compelled to engage in practices inimical to Christianity and disgusting to morality. With such evidence he felt that he could compel the papacy to crush the Temple absolutely and award to him the wealth of the disbanded Order.

He would have liked to receive voluntary confessions from the prisoners, and the Templars were offered their freedom and pensions if they admitted the charges against them. But as the king had foreseen, bribes had no effect, and confessions had to be wrung from the Templars by cruelty. William Imbert personally superintended the torture of the hundred and forty Templars who had been incarcerated in a number of different prisons in Paris. No terror, no humiliation, no

suffering was too great to inflict upon the captives. Some of them were starved and most of the others were allowed only bread and water; they were kept in filthy cells, robbed of their few remaining belongings and even their clothing by the gaolers, and denied the consolations of the Church. Almost immediately after their arrest, the Templars were put to the question, and submitted to the most fiendish penalties when they proved "obstinate". A cord round his feet or which bound his hands behind his back would be pulled over a pulley so that a Templar was hanging from the air; then the cord would be suddenly released. The Templar would come crashing towards the floor. He was halted before he reached it, sometimes at the expense of dislocated joints. This was usually the first step in the process of breaking a man's resistance. He might next have fire applied to the soles of his feet, his legs crushed in iron boots until the bones broke, or wedges of wood driven into the nails of his fingers or toes. Some of the Templars were left spreadeagled for days; heavy weights might be attached to the leg or arm or even the navel of the Templar as he swung suspended from the air; teeth were pulled out and the nerves probed, thumbscrews were used, water was poured into the mouth through a funnel until a prisoner choked.

William Imbert conducted the examination of the brethren in their own headquarters, the Temple in Paris. Although alleged to be in the care of the Inquisition, the Templars were lodged in royal prisons and their questioning proceeded in the presence of Philip's representatives—the king himself is said to have attended some of the examinations. The Templars knew themselves to be in the power of a pitiless enemy who was resolved to destroy them. They recognised William Imbert as Philip's creature, and, although the examination affected to be conducted in the name of the Inquisition, they felt that they were being tried by servants of the Crown. They could not look for aid from the Pope,

for they had been told that Clement had sanctioned the investigation and approved the use of torture. When the prisoners appeared before William of Paris, it was in a room around which instruments of torture were prominently displayed, and nearly every Templar had already experienced the terror of these instruments. Before his examination began, the Templar was ordered to swear on the Scriptures that he would tell the whole truth, both as regards himself and all other Templars, and after he had made his statements, he swore again that he had told the truth, neither omitting nor misrepresenting anything, and that he had spoken of his own free will and not because of any fear of torture or for any other reason. The main points on which William Imbert wanted admissions were the denial of Christ, the spitting and trampling on the cross, indecent kisses at reception, homosexuality, and the worship of an idol. If the Templars confessed that they had denied Christ and worshipped an idol then they stood self-condemned of practices which put them outside the pale of Christianity.

The tribunal at Paris sat from October 18th until November 24th, and in that period examined nearly one hundred and forty prisoners. Among the prisoners who appeared before it were three of the great officers of the Temple—Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master; Geoffrey de Charnay, Preceptor of Normandy; and Hugh de Payraud, Visitor General of France. Geoffrey de Charnay, the first of the three to be examined before the Grand Inquisitor (October 21st), deposed that on his admission into the Temple he had been shown a crucifix and told that Christ was a false prophet; he had been ordered to deny Christ thrice, which thing he had done, though with his mouth only and not in his heart. Asked if he had spat on the figure of Christ, he pleaded that he did not remember, but he admitted that he had kissed the Receiver on the navel. He had heard it said that the brethren should take their pleasures together

rather than seek the company of women, but he personally had never been required to have indecent relations with any brother. He had performed the initiation ceremony for recruits into the Order. The first of them was received in the same manner as he himself had been, but he accepted all others without making them deny Christ or spit on the crucifix or engage in any irregular practices, because he realised that the method of his own reception was disgusting and sacrilegious and contrary to the faith of the Church.

Jacques de Molay was examined three days later. He admitted denying Christ three times and spitting on his reception, but he spat on the ground, not on the crucifix. Nothing had been said on his reception about indecent relations with other brethren. When he himself received members into the Temple there had been no irregularity, but he explained that he had left his assistants to complete the initiation ceremonies. The deposition of the Grand Master omits any reference to idolatory or any of the other charges, and it may be assumed that de Molay contested them. For it was common to include only admissions of guilt in a deposition, and to leave out the negative replies of the prisoners. A few days later de Molay repeated these avowals before the University of Paris. Historians who pronounce the Temple to be guilty rightly stress the importance of the Grand Master's admissions so soon after his arrest. De Molay does not appear to have been tortured at any time, and certainly not so early in the persecution. Why then should he make such admissions if he were innocent? If the confession is genuine—and doubt has been thrown on it—the only explanation consistent with his innocence is fear of the consequences for himself and the Templars if he denied the charges. He is said to have especially feared the charge of homosexuality brought against him and been promised that this part of the indictment would not be pressed if he acknowledged other charges. The Grand Master had been a great

personage, now he was suddenly treated worse than a common malefactor and arraigned as an enemy of the faith. He may have been threatened with death and at that time have lacked the courage which he was to show later; but the most probable solution is that Philip the Fair offered to spare the Templars as individuals if the Grand Master gave evidence which would warrant the Pope in suppressing the Order as an Order. De Molay was a simple and unlettered man and incapable of coping with the subtle lawyers whom the king employed. He believed himself and his Order to be quite deserted and already sacrificed by the papacy to Philip, and he may have thought himself justified in confessing to crimes of which he was innocent if thereby he could save his followers. No one can say; but the conduct of de Molay in the concluding stages of the process is emphatically not that of a guilty man.

Hugh de Payraud, examined on November 9th, was embittered. He had hoped to be chosen as Grand Master, but de Molay—by a disgraceful trick, it is alleged—had won the honour. De Payraud made a sweeping confession of guilt. On his reception he had been taken behind an altar and shown a crucifix; he was ordered to deny Christ and to spit on the cross, but though he spoke the words of denial once he did not spit on the cross. He had kissed the brother who received him, but only on the mouth. When he himself received new members, he made them kiss him on the navel, the bottom of the spine, and the mouth. He showed them a crucifix and told them to spit on it and deny Jesus Christ thrice, but he explained to recruits that they need not deny Christ in their hearts. Asked if some recruits refused to obey, he said that some had, but in the end they consented to deny Christ and spit on the cross. He admitted that he had told recruits that immoral relations with other brethren were permitted in the Order. Asked why he told recruits that he would be satisfied by avowals and acts

which they denied in their hearts, he said that the statutes of the Order called for such avowals and acts. At first de Payraud contested the allegation that other Receivers used the same procedure on the entry of recruits, but he appeared later in the same day before the tribunal and, pleading that he had misunderstood the question, he corrected his answer and said that all the recruits were received in the same way. He deposed further that he and the other brethren adored an idol at a chapter, but said that he had done so with his lips and not in his heart. He described the idol as a head with four feet, two before and two behind, but could give no further particulars.

Most of the prisoners were sergeants and menials; less than half were of knightly caste. Even among the knights the majority was illiterate, soldiers whose life had been spent in war and who were at a grave disadvantage when being heard before a tribunal of expert examiners. The inhuman tortures and privations of prison had broken the spirit of men who had so recently been proud warriors, boastful of their membership of a great Order, convinced that the Temple would ensure them comfort and even luxury until the end of their days and had the power to protect them from any interference by the secular power. They came before the tribunal, shaking with fear, willing to admit almost anything, and the record of their examination shows a succession of demoralised men whose evidence carries no conviction. Almost every Templar confessed to one at least of the principal charges. More than three-quarters of the prisoners admitted that on their reception they had denied Christ thrice—nearly all hastened to add, however, that they denied him only by their lips and not in their hearts. They acknowledged that they had been commanded to spit on the cross—most of them explained that they spat over it or under it or beside it and not on the cross. Indecent kisses to the Receiver on entry into the Order were also generally

admitted, but only three Templars confessed to homosexual practices and de Payraud was almost alone in admitting idolatry. In most of the depositions, no reference is made to the idol; where it is mentioned, the prisoners say that they have never seen an idol at chapters of the Temple or even heard of such an idol.

After closing the proceedings at Paris, William Imbert started on a tour of the provinces in November, and conducted examinations of the Templars at Melun, Bayeux, and Troyes. He could not, however, undertake the questioning of all the prisoners, and tribunals of Dominicans were set up at Nîmes, Pamiers, Beaucaire, Caen, Rouen, Cahors, Carcassonne, and Bigorre. The Grand Inquisitor issued a comprehensive list of charges on which the Templars were to be questioned, and repeated not only the accusations which had already been put forward but added some fresh ones, claiming that the great officers of the Order had admitted them before himself.

In this indictment William Imbert claimed that the Templars "at the time of their reception or soon afterwards or when opportunity arose were required to deny Christ or God or the Blessed Virgin or all the Saints of God".

That recruits were taught by the Receivers that Christ was not the true God, but a false prophet who had been crucified for his own crimes and not for the salvation of mankind.

That neither the Receivers nor those whom they received believed that there was any salvation in Christ.

That new members were forced to spit on the cross or on the sign of the cross and the image of Christ, "though some spat only beside it".

That the Receivers made recruits trample on the cross and defiled the cross on Good Friday or some other day in Holy Week.

That the Templars, to the derision of Christ and the holy faith, worshipped a certain cat in their chapters.

That the brethren did not believe in the sacraments of the Church and that the priests omitted the words of consecration from the Mass.

That the Grand Master, the Visitors, and the Preceptors, many of whom were laymen, claimed to be able, and actually pretended to give absolution to the Templars, and "the Grand Master, even before his arrest, confessed this in the presence of reliable persons".

That recruits were required to give indecent kisses and obliged to engage in unchastity with other brethren.

That recruits had to swear they would never leave the Order.

That the receptions were held secretly and "for this reason there has long been a violent suspicion of irregularities". That the Templars had idols or heads in every province, some with three faces, some with one, and that in their chapters they adored and honoured and worshipped such an idol as a god and as their saviour, and that they believed that it made the land fertile and the trees blossom.

That every Templar had a girdle which he must never take off and that this girdle had been laid on the idol and was believed to have special powers as a charm.

That the Templars were forbidden to reveal what happened at the chapters on their reception and did not dare to talk of these things even among themselves, since some who had done so were put to death or imprisoned.

That even though individual brothers might not themselves do the infamies mentioned, yet they knew of them and did not try to correct the errors of the Order.

That the Templars were not permitted to confess except to the chaplains of the Temple.

That all Templars must bind themselves to put the wealth and power of the Order above everything else and were taught that it was no sin to use every means, however unworthy, for the aggrandisement of the fraternity.

Every prisoner, William Imbert instructed, was to be examined by the Inquisition regarding the identity of the Receiver, the place where the reception took place, and the manner of the proceedings, and then questioned one by one on the charges in the indictment. It was important, the Grand Inquisitor concluded, that the Templars should be made to say by whom these abuses were introduced into the Order and the reason for their introduction, and more especially that the brethren should be closely examined about the idols, who had charge of such idols and where these were now to be found.

The results of the inquisition in the provinces was to incriminate the Order more deeply. Such records as are available show that outside Paris by far the greater number of Templars confessed that on their reception they had denied Christ and spat on the cross. Indecent kisses to the Receiver were also admitted almost unanimously. But when questioned about the worship of an idol, the brethren, with a very few exceptions, denied having seen an idol in the chapters and swore that they had never heard of idolatry in the Order until their arrest.

Although idolatry was one of the charges which both Imbert and Philip were most anxious to prove, the outcome of the investigation did not dissatisfy them. There now existed a large number of confessions of heresy and indecency and immorality with which Philip believed that he could force the hand of Pope Clement. The Inquisition had tried to establish that the heretical practices at the reception of new members were in accordance with the secret statutes of the Temple. In this they had not wholly succeeded, but

evidence had been forthcoming that the same procedure had been followed in many places and there was sufficient evidence to give rise to a strong suspicion that the manner of the reception of the brethren was laid down in some document, even though a copy of the document itself could not be produced.

The most horrible tortures had been employed to force the confessions from the Templars, but the Inquisition gravely reported that "mild arguments" only had been used—mild arguments which in Paris alone caused the death of thirty-six Templars! No evidence was valid to the Inquisition except that of the accused himself. If a man did not confess, then the Inquisition assumed that it was because of his obstinacy and the strength given him by the devil, and the inquisitors stopped at nothing to compel self-condemnation. If a man were innocent, the inquisitors argued, God would give him the power to defy the tortures of the rack, the thumbscrew, the boot, hoisting, the question by water, and the other cruelties. Several years before, Philip the Fair had strongly objected to the inhuman methods of the Inquisition in extorting confessions, but he hounded on William of Paris to use the most extreme methods to force admissions from the Templars.

Confessions forced from alleged heretics by torture were considered by most people as well as the Inquisition to be worthy of credence, and the heretical practices admitted by so many Templars in this examination would ordinarily have been sufficient to condemn prisoners. The next step in a normal process was to hand the prisoners over to the secular arm for punishment; for the Inquisition itself did not shed blood or otherwise concern itself with punishing the heretics whom it rejected from the Church. Although this was not a normal process since it related to a religious institution whose members were under the protection of the Pope and answerable only to him, Philip was capable of inducing

William of Paris to condemn the Templars and then give them to the State for punishment; and, had the king been able to get his way, the prisoners would probably have been dealt with summarily, as men found guilty of heresy. But the Pope protested against such precipitancy, and at this stage he saved the Templars whom he later abandoned. Clement pronounced the seizure of the Templars an unjustifiable interference with the rights of the papacy, and on October 27th he issued a lively Bull, pointing out that the Order was under the sole direction of the Holy See and that the Pope alone could take any steps against the brethren. He denounced William of Paris for setting the Inquisition in operation against the Templars, and removed him from office for contempt of the Holy See and abuse of the powers conferred upon him. Clement acknowledged that he had agreed to cause an investigation into the affairs of the Temple, but emphasised that it was for him to choose the manner of the proceedings and that he would never have concurred in so violent a measure and so flagrant a defiance of the Church. He explained that he had no wish to defend the prisoners if they were guilty, but expressed the opinion that there was not a grain of truth in the charges. The previous kings of France, he reminded Philip, had been faithful sons of the Church and respectful of the Holy See, and Philip would find no warrant in the history of his ancestors for so scandalous an outrage.

The king at first treated the protests of the papacy with indifference and encouraged the Inquisition to press ahead with the examination and obtain so convincing a body of damning evidence against the Temple that the Pope would be powerless to save the Order. As William of Paris had been suspended from office by the Pope, he had no authority to act, but the Inquisition still obeyed him and William and his myrmidons continued to put the Templars to the question. The Pope renewed his protests and Philip had to take some action. He had silenced Clement on previous occasions and

he did his best to silence him now. He accused the Pope of being careless of the faith and a friend to heresy and repeated that he himself had merely intervened in the matter at the request of the Inquisition.

Clement was not satisfied. He appeared to be about to give real battle to the king and come forward as a steadfast champion of the Temple. But Clement could hardly have been more feebly equipped. He was within reach of Philip's vengeance—even if he could have escaped from Avignon, Rome was still barred to him—and he owed his election to France. The king continued to press for the condemnation of Boniface, an undertaking to which Clement was more and more opposed, and from which he hoped to wean Philip by placating him on other questions. Philip's position on the other hand was very strong indeed. Although he had been the initiator of the persecution, he could make out a defence of his behaviour which carried conviction. He reiterated again and again that the secular power was in duty bound to come to the aid of the spiritual arm when so requested—a principle that had been enunciated by many Popes and which Clement could not contest; and, said Philip, who was he to question the right of the Grand Inquisitor of France, a man directly appointed by the papacy? Philip held all the cards and he played them adroitly. He made his actions appear to have been dictated by a desire to help the Church and he argued that any criticism of him was due to tepidness for religion on the part of his critics. The king had already discredited the Templars by sweeping them from their preceptories and treating them as criminals guilty of horrible crimes, and he had evidence of heresy which Clement did not dare to ignore. The archbishops of France were under Philip's thumb, and they informed Clement that they heartily supported the intervention of the State in so serious an affair. The Church of France was indeed almost solid behind the sovereign, for Philip's propagandists had converted the clergy

to the view that the Temple was a corrupt and depraved institution—an institution, incidentally, whose extinction would be of material benefit to the clergy.

Faced with so many determined opponents, Clement meekly bowed to the demands of Philip. He reinstated William of Paris as Grand Inquisitor of France, remarking that, although William had justly incurred censure by submitting the Templars to examination without authority, yet at the request of his “dear son Philip” the Pope had decided to exercise leniency towards the offender. In a Bull dated November 22nd, Clement announced that, since his pronouncement of October 27th, evidence had been laid before him which justified a strong belief that the brethren were guilty of the most odious crimes, and he could not therefore resist an investigation. The Pope not only retracted his his criticisms of Philip, but praised him fulsomely for his zeal in defence of the holy faith!

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS IN ENGLAND

PHILIP THE FAIR was not content to put the Templars in France under restraint. He wanted the brethren to be indicted in every country in Christendom. For the Order could not be broken by the Pope unless it was shown that the abuses had been universally practised, and until the Order was broken Philip could not hope to seize the lands of the Templars for himself. The strength of the Temple outside France was about ten thousand, and if these men were at liberty they would be a perpetual menace. They might stir up strife against Philip and would almost certainly try to assist the French Templars. It was not inconceivable that one of the kings who had previously been at war with Philip might be induced to resume hostilities if assured of the support of the Templars in England, Germany, Spain, Italy and elsewhere, or that the Order itself might invade France, either to save or to avenge the French Templars. So long as action against the Order was confined to his own kingdom, Philip was highly vulnerable. The free Templars would at the least appeal to the Pope, and, as the Order was powerful in every country, would probably obtain the backing of several of the princes in representations to the papacy. Clement would find it difficult to resist such appeals, and might even be glad to support them in order to escape from his bondage to Philip. If, however, the Templars were found guilty throughout Christendom, the Pope would be helpless.

The situation had been carefully examined by Philip's ministers before a single Templar was arrested in France, and when the coup was brought off in the kingdom on

October 13th, letters from Philip were already on the way to England, Naples, Aragon, Navarre, Castille, Portugal, Flanders and Italy. Philip explained in detail the charges against the Temple, emphasised that the brethren in France were held on behalf of the Church, and suggested that his example should be followed by his fellow-rulers. The response to this suggestion was disappointing. Philip had believed that the princes would be induced to arrest the Templars in their territories to protect themselves from the suspicion of harbouring heretics, and in the hope of obtaining the property of the Order; but most of the rulers refused to act. Edward II of England, Philip's son-in-law, protested strongly and dismissed the accusations as wildly fantastic. On November 20th he replied that he was summoning the Seneschal of Agen to explain the circumstances in which the charges had first been made against the Templars. Three days later he begged Portugal, Castille and some of the other princes not to act until further information had been received, and to consider whether an Order which had always been renowned for its fervour in the religious war and its devotion to God could possibly be guilty of such enormities as were urged against it. Jealousy and greed were, he hinted, the explanation of the accusations, and he for his part retained his belief in the innocence of the Temple.

Edward also wrote to the Pope (December 4th) in defence of the Order, and appealed urgently for the papal protection to be given to an Order which he described as disgracefully maligned and abused. Had this support been offered earlier to the Templars, Clement might have defied Philip the Fair; but before Clement received Edward's letter he had already capitulated to Philip and issued the Bull of November 22nd. There had, said Clement in this Bull, long been rumours of heretical practices in the Order, but he had refused to credit them. Now, however, he could not doubt that much existed in the Temple which required correction, especially as the

great leaders of the Order had themselves admitted horrible heresies. He commanded Edward and the other princes to adopt the same procedure as Philip of France and arrest all the Templars within their jurisdiction on the same day and seize their property. Both the persons and possessions of the Temple were to be held by the temporal authorities until instructions were received from the Church.

The opposition of Edward collapsed. Whether in the interim he was convinced of the guilt of the Templars or tempted by the chance to enrich himself with the goods of the Order, whether he was simply afraid to disobey the Pope is not clear, but the king who had previously been so eager to defend the Temple now turned into a persecutor, though a relatively mild one. On December 20th instructions were issued to the sheriffs of England to arrest the Templars and take charge of their property on January 8th, 1308, and similar instructions were sent to the king's officers in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The sheriffs were told to carry out their orders with great secrecy, but Edward was not so well served as Philip the Fair and he lacked the highly developed police organisation which had been built up in France. Hundreds of Templars escaped arrest and found safety in the hills or in the houses of sympathisers, and only 228 members were taken and lodged in royal prisons. England had no propaganda machine to malign the prisoners, and public opinion was not marshalled against them. The arrogance and luxury and wealth of the Order had inevitably given rise to envy and complaint, but England did not exhibit the hatred and detestation of the Templars which was so prominent a feature of the process in France. Neither the king, the barons nor the people wished to punish the Templars, and the accused brethren were treated with great leniency while awaiting their trial and during the actual proceedings. William de la More, the Grand Preceptor of England, and a number of other leading Templars were even

released from prison for a time after their arrest, and the horrors inflicted on the Templars in France had no counterpart in England.

Nor were the harsh measures of France adopted in Germany, Austria, Portugal, Castille, Aragon or elsewhere except in Italy. The King of Sicily, himself of the French house of Anjou, treated the Templars with as much inhumanity as Philip the Fair, and in the papal states the brethren were subjected to the greatest harshness. Although, however, most of the princes were unwilling to use cruelty towards the Templars, nearly all of them felt compelled to obey, or try to obey, the papal Bull, and put the brethren under restraint. But the general feeling of Christendom at the end of 1307 was definitely in favour of the innocence of the Templars, and the savage persecution was regarded as the result of a plot hatched between the feeble Pope and the avaricious French king.

This attitude on the part of the princes had its effect on Clement. He had weakly given in to Philip by issuing the Bull of November 22nd, but in the early part of the new year (1308) he found the courage to defy France and cancel his approval of the measures taken against the Temple. For Philip had incensed Clement by reverting to the demand that the memory of Boniface should be condemned. The king had hinted several times that if the papacy sacrificed the Templars the case against Boniface would be allowed to lapse, and this was one of the principal reasons why Clement had deserted the Temple. Now, however, Philip denied the bargain, and pressed for a process against Boniface. Clement saw that Philip was insatiable and that the Templars had been abandoned without any advantage having been gained by the papacy. So the Pope rebelled against his tyrannical master. He replied to Philip that he would not condemn Boniface and that on reconsideration he had changed his mind about the Templars and believed in their innocence. He criticised

the clergy and inquisitors of France, and said that the brethren would henceforth be dealt with by the Holy See.

News of this surprising *volte-face* reached the Templars imprisoned in France. On learning that Clement had reversed his decision and declared himself the protector of the Order, the brethren regained hope. De Payraud, the Preceptor of Normandy, who had made so abject a confession before William of Paris, revoked his avowals and swore that he was innocent when questioned by Cardinal Berenger de Fredol and Cardinal Stephen de Suizi, whom the Pope had sent to Paris as his legates. Other Templars in the royal gaols who stood self-condemned by their testimonies before the Inquisition likewise asserted that they were guiltless and that the confessions had been torn from them by torture, under which they had been willing to admit anything and everything.

Philip was faced with the ruin of all his plans at a time when he thought himself impregnable. He had gone too far to retreat, and his kingdom might be forfeit if he now failed to crush the Temple and permitted such defiance on the part of the papacy. The situation demanded quick action, and Philip's ministers were equal to the emergency. The propaganda machine was set in operation again and never had it worked so furiously. Ever since their arrest the Templars had been the subject of a continuous stream of condemnation in speeches and proclamations, and now the campaign against them was intensified. But it was not enough to vilify the Templars. The Pope must also be attacked and made to cower before France. Clement had laid himself open to criticism by distributing the great offices of the Church among his friends and relatives and by selling appointments, and Philip's propagandists fiercely assailed him as a betrayer of the interests of the Church and an enemy to the Christian faith.

These attacks, however, were not made in Philip's name.

They were incorporated in letters addressed to Philip—letters, however, written by Philip's propagandists and by Philip's orders. Thus the king could allege that the complaints were spontaneous and that he had no option but to examine the protests of his subjects against the papacy. From charges that Clement sold the benefices of the Church, Philip's hired liars passed to other accusations. Clement, they wrote, loves gold above all things, and it is because he has been bribed that he now defends the Temple from well-merited punishment. The prisoners have confessed to great crimes, yet the Pope pretends to believe in their innocence and is willing to sully the faith so long as he lines his pockets with money. He pretends that the pious King of France has acted irregularly in arresting these depraved heretics, and declares that only the Pope can interfere in the affairs of the Templars. Let Clement remember Moses! Moses had condemned twenty-two thousand Israelites and put them to death without the authority of Aaron, the priest set over the people. It was absurd for Clement to suggest that the King of France should permit such self-confessed corruptors of the faith as the Templars to continue their devilish work in France, and all faithful Christians would realise that the Pope's opposition was based only on greed and indifference to the cause of Jesus Christ.

Philip had hoped to receive the approval of the Masters of Theology of the University of Paris to the measures that he had taken and considered taking against the Templars, and had put seven questions to them on the subject. The University replied on March 25th, 1308, after three months of discussion. The questions and answers are summarised below: —

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. It is admitted that the Church has a duty to proceed against the offenders of the faith, both to	1. A secular prince can take action against heretics only when they have been remitted to him by

QUESTION

save their souls and to protect the spread of heresy among the innocent, and that the Church, though it neither judges nor condemns, remits the obstinate and the relapsed to the secular courts. If, however, a secular prince is advised of gross crimes against the faith being committed in his territory, is he entitled to exercise justice against the offenders in order to obviate scandal and prevent the dissemination of evil doctrines, whether or not he has been asked by the Church to do so ?

2. In the affair of the Templars, is the temporal prince, by virtue of his authority as guardian of his people, justified in proceeding against the brethren as heretics, or do the Templars constitute a religious body against which the prince cannot act. Or, in view of the confessions made by members of the Order, can it be claimed that the Order is not a religious Order at all, but is actually a fraternity of knights ?
3. As more than fifty Templars in various parts of France, including the Grand Master and other dignitaries of the Order, have made confessions of heresy, can the guilt of the whole Order be presumed as proven, and can all the members be held as guilty ? Or is it necessary that confessions of similar crimes should be forthcoming from members of the Order in other countries before the guilt of the Temple as a whole can be regarded as proven ?

ANSWER

the Church. Where, however, the crime is evident and danger would arise from delay, the secular prince may arrest heretics without a specific request by the Church, but such heretics must be handed over to the Church as early as possible.

2. Although the Templars are knights, yet they must be regarded as members of a religious Order and have the privileges of servants of the Church. Those members, however, who have made no profession to the Church but have on their entry into the Temple been required only to subscribe to heretical teachings are excluded from the benefits of religious ; whether they have in fact made due profession to Church is for the Church to decide.
3. The confessions made, especially by the leaders of the Temple, give rise to a very strong suspicion of the guilt of the whole Order, and are sufficient to justify a charge against the whole Order.

QUESTION

4. As regards Templars who, after making profession of faith, have at their reception engaged in heretical practices, but who deny the charges and cannot (owing to the death of the members who received them) be shown to be guilty, should such be received as belonging to the Church?
5. If there are, say, ten, thirty, forty, or more brethren who deny the crimes and whose guilt cannot be proved, do these Templars retain the rights and privileges of the Order, or is the whole Order condemned by the confessions of the other brethren?
6. Bearing in mind the preceding questions, are the goods of the Temple liable to confiscation by the prince in whose jurisdiction they are found, or must they be reserved for the Church, or for the benefit of the Holy Land for which they were originally given?
7. If the prince, either of right or as an act of grace, devotes such goods to the cause of the Holy Land, should the administration be in the hands of the Church or the princes, more especially in France, where such goods have always been particularly under the care of the king and his predecessors?

ANSWER

4. In view of the confessions which have been made, there exists strong grounds for suspecting all the members of heresy, and it is right that the brethren whose guilt is not proven should be carefully guarded lest they spread infection.
5. The Masters refer to the replies to questions 3 and 4.
- 6 and 7. As the goods were given to the Templars as defenders of the Holy Land, and as the purpose for which they were given has not yet been achieved, the property must be faithfully preserved for the benefit of the Holy Land. As to whether the Church or the prince should administer the possessions of the Temple, the Masters point out that the principal thing is that the property should be administered to the best advantage of the Holy Land, and it follows therefore that the party best equipped to conserve the property should be entrusted with its administration.

This series of replies was far from what Philip had hoped for, though not perhaps from what his lawyers expected. But the opinions were not altogether unsatisfactory. In particular, the Masters agreed that in emergency a secular prince was justified in arresting heretics, without prior consultation with the Church, though the prisoners must be

handed over to the ecclesiastical authorities without delay. Even therefore if Clement denounced the Inquisition in France as incompetent to seek the aid of the temporal power against a religious Order, Philip could contend that he was still within his rights in suppressing a grave scandal. The king, however, placed much more reliance on other weapons in his contest with the Pope. He meant to appear before Clement in the guise of a ruler whose people pressed for the extirpation of the Temple, and he summoned the three estates to meet him at Tours. Other kings of France had been renowned for their protection of the purity of the faith, wrote Philip in summoning his Parliament, and he could not fail to follow so glorious an example. The awful crimes of the Templars were common knowledge—how the Templars had denied Jesus Christ, trampled on the cross, scoffed at sacraments holy to all Christians, and engaged in unnatural vices. These crimes had been committed throughout the kingdom as was conclusively proved by “the depositions of the dignitaries of the Order (if it may be called an Order); and must have been committed also in other countries, indeed it is proved that they were committed overseas. . . . To ensure that, for the protection of the faith and the honour of our Sacred Mother the Church, those frightful crimes and errors are stamped out, we propose in the very near future to go to the Holy See”. The three estates duly attended Tours and were harangued by Philip’s ministers. The decision of the barons, the clergy and the commons were unanimous. Parliament reported to the king that the Templars were guilty beyond a shadow of doubt and that nothing less than death would fit the crime.

Strengthened with this mandate from his kingdom, Philip went to visit the Pope at Poitiers in June, 1308. He was accompanied by his brother, Charles of Valois, and a strong armed force. The soldiers surrounded the papal court, and it seemed as though Philip intended to seize the Pope if the

negotiations failed. Clement's resistance, however, was short-lived. He had to admit that the evidence of errors among the Templars called for the strictest enquiry, but he urged that the proper course was to re-organise the Order, and, when Philip brushed this suggestion aside, he begged for time to consider the form of the investigation more fully. The king replied that there had already been too many delays, and demanded that the Pope should forthwith institute proceedings against the brethren. He also returned to his old plea for the condemnation of Boniface; and he put forward a further request. Albert of Austria, Emperor of Germany, had been assassinated in the preceding month, and the throne of Germany was vacant. Philip aspired to it for Charles of Valois, and promised that, if the Pope supported Charles, Germany and France would organise a Crusade to recapture the Holy Land. Clement was not to be tempted by the bribe of a Crusade. He realised that the election of Charles would be ruinous to the power of the papacy since the Empire as well as France would then be in the grasp of Philip the Fair. The Pope therefore pretended to try to obtain the Empire for the Valois, but he worked against him in secret and another claimant was chosen for the imperial crown.

But there could be no open support and secret opposition in either of the two other projects which Philip pressed so tenaciously, and Clement turned and twisted in vain. Philip required a definite promise that the process against the Templars should be started and that the memory of Boniface should be condemned. Clement did not want to agree to either, but he could not resist both of the demands made by the ruler to whom he owed the tiara. Already Clement had suffered from the operations of the French propagandists who had attacked his character so viciously and he knew that the king would not stop at defamation. Philip had forcibly seized one pope and he would seize another if need be.

Poitiers was thronged with French troops, and Clement was defenceless.

When it was a choice of abandoning the Templars or condemning Boniface, Clement never had any doubt which alternative he must take; better to sacrifice the living Templars than be guilty of the unprecedented outrage of pronouncing Boniface VIII guilty of the terrible indictment drawn up by the French lawyers. But Philip wanted proceedings against both. The discussions between pope and king ended with a compromise. Philip was agreeable that Boniface should be judged by a general council of the Church to be held at Vienne in October, 1310, and that date was still two years distant. As for the Templars, the Pope undertook that their fate should be decided by the bishops and inquisitors of France and all other countries. De Molay and the great dignitaries of the Temple were, however, to be reserved for the judgment of the papacy. The bishops and inquisitors would proceed against the Templars as individuals, but they were forbidden to proceed against the Temple as an Order. The charges against the Temple as a whole would be the subject of separate enquiries by commissioners specially appointed for the purpose by the Holy See, and the final decision on the Order would be given by the Council of Vienne.

There remained the disposal of the property of the Temple. Clement had no illusions about Philip, whom he knew to be unscrupulous and grasping, but he hoped to save some of the wealth of the Order for the Church, even if the Temple were abolished. The king, however, was more than a match for Clement. He had already enriched himself with most of the movable property and he planned also to acquire the lands and houses of the Temple. He could not openly hold on to the possessions of a religious Order which was not yet condemned, but his lawyers pointed the obvious solution of the problem. The property of the Temple was

formally handed over to the Church to be devoted to the cause of the Holy Land. A secret agreement was, however, drawn up at the same time, and by it Philip was given almost absolute control over the administration of the Temple properties. It was as impossible for Philip openly to act as the custodian of the Templars as of their possessions, so a second little comedy was enacted. The Templars were accused heretics and as such must be under the care of the Church. The transfer was duly made, but on the ground that the Church could not lodge so many prisoners, the Templars were housed in Philip's prisons, attended by Philip's gaolers and under the surveillance of Philip's ministers!

Having gained these concessions, Philip withdrew his soldiers from Avignon at the end of June. A few weeks later there arrived at Poitiers another contingent of French troops. They came as a guard, not for a king, but for seventy-two broken and despairing prisoners. Clement had asked that a number of Templars should be brought before him, and from the prisons of Paris Philip had chosen seventy-two brethren who had already confessed to some of the crimes. Great care had been taken to select Templars who would repeat their avowals, and almost all of them reiterated at Poitiers that on their entry into the Temple they had denied Christ and been told to spit on a crucifix. The farce lasted three days. On the fourth day, the guilty depositions of the Templars were read before the Pope in the presence of an assembly of clergy, lords and commoners. The brethren who had confessed attended this consistory, but the few who had protested their innocence were excluded and their statements were suppressed.

Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master, Hugh de Payraud, the Visitor of France, Geoffrey de Charnay, the Preceptor of Normandy, Geoffrey de Gonaville, the Preceptor of Aquitaine, and the Preceptor of Cyprus had also been taken

from their prisons and transported towards Poitiers. Whether Clement did not wish to meet men with whom he had been on terms of close friendship but whom he had so treacherously sacrificed, or whether Philip was determined that de Molay and the other dignitaries should have no chance of moving the Pope by their appeals is uncertain. Whatever the reason, the Grand Master and his companions were not brought before the Pope. They were stopped at Chinon, only a short journey from Poitiers, on the ground that their health was too feeble to permit them to continue the journey and submit to a papal examination. The cardinals, Berenger de Fredol and Stephen de Suizi, who had been Clement's legates to Paris, were sent to take the depositions of the dignitaries. All of them acknowledged before the cardinals that on their entry into the Order they had denied Jesus Christ. Hugh de Payraud, who had confessed to all the crimes before William of Paris but had later retracted his avowals before Berenger and Stephen in Paris, now reverted to his original testimony. He admitted all the charges, including the adoration of an idol in chapter. The legates reported the result of their examination to the Pope, and added that, as they had seemed sincerely repentant and as they had confessed their crimes, the great officers had been given absolution and admitted to communion. In a letter to Philip the cardinals begged that the king would extend leniency to men who were so contrite and humble. Heresy belonged absolutely to the Church, and it is strange that two cardinals should appeal to a secular prince regarding the treatment of heretics.

The confessions of de Molay and the other leaders at Chinon and the avowals of most of the seventy-two Templars at Poitiers had been made before representatives of the Church, but royal officers had also been present and the prisoners knew that they were still under the control of Philip. Clement did not wish to investigate the circum-

stances too closely. The examination had been meant to serve one purpose and one purpose only—to enable the Pope to say that a number of Templars had admitted their crimes before him in person. Six weeks afterwards (August 12th) he issued the Bull *Faciens misericordiam* to the bishops in every country of Christendom. He cannot, says Clement, doubt the guilt of the Templars, and as the protector of the faith he would be lacking sadly in his duty if he did not instruct a stringent examination to be carried out. He had himself seen seventy-two of the brethren, and his cardinals had received confessions from the chiefs of the Order. These guilty avowals and other evidence had convinced him that he was wrong to regard the Templars as unjustly accused. "Our beloved son in Christ, Philip", had been most helpful in producing facts which could not be contraverted, and, Clement emphasised, the king had throughout acted solely out of love for the Church and not with any desire to possess himself of the property of the Temple. Philip had "entirely surrendered that property to the Church", said Clement, but he made no reference to the secret agreement whereby the immovable possessions of the Order remained in the king's hands for the present.

Almost a year passed before the examination of the Templars was resumed in France, and it was not until September, 1309, more than eighteen months since their arrest, that arrangements were made to submit the Templars in England to investigation. On September 14th, the brethren in England were taken from their prisons and concentrated in the Tower of London, York Castle, and Lincoln Castle. A week later, the Archbishop of Canterbury issued the indictment against the Templars. It repeated the charges which had been made in France: the denial of Christ, spitting and trampling on the cross, idolatry and homosexual practices. The prisoners were also to be questioned on the practice of confessing only to the priests

of the Order and of holding the chapters at night and in secret. Before the examination began, a Bull was published throughout England re-affirming Clement's belief in the guilt of the Templars and threatening excommunication against anyone who ventured to shelter or defend the Templars. Hundreds of them were still at liberty and many had returned to civil life. A drive to round up these members was organised, but few were discovered, or at least betrayed to the authorities. The beard was one of the distinguishing features of the Templars, and people were sometimes arrested as suspected Templars on no other evidence than that they had beards. So much of a nuisance did this become to bearded men that safe-conducts had to be issued to save them from interference.

The Pope had sent two prelates to England—Dieudonné, Abbot of Lagny, and Sicard de Vaur, Clement's chaplain and a papal notary—to assist Winchelsea, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Greenfield, Archbishop of York, in the examination of the Templars. The papal emissaries and Ralph Baldock, Bishop of London, began the enquiry on October 21st. Fifty Templars—knights, chaplains, sergeants, and menials—were questioned. They had not been tortured, and appeared proudly before the court determined to contest the charges to the last. No guilty admissions were made. The Templars swore that their reception into the Order had been free from sacrilege or obscenity and that the only kiss had been a kiss of peace. None of them knew of an idol. Asked whether they believed that the girdle they wore had magic properties, they replied that the suggestion was quite new to them. Why then did they wear their girdles night and day? To this query, the answers varied. Most of the prisoners had no idea; they had been told that it was a regulation and they had obeyed it without question. Other brethren thought that the girdle was to remind them of their vow of chastity, still others that it was worn as a penance

and had been instituted by St. Bernard for this reason. A number of the Templars readily confessed that no brother was allowed to disclose what happened at a chapter, but all scoffed at the suggestion that anything irregular took place at such assemblies.

This preliminary examination of the English Templars lasted until November 17th and produced not a scrap of real evidence. The tribunal then proceeded to hear witnesses who were not members of the Order. Their testimony, however, was either favourable to the Order or based only on rumours of irregularities in the brotherhood. Much play was made by the court of the mystery which surrounded the ceremonies of the Temple. One brother, asked why the chapters had been held in secret,¹ answered, "because of our own foolishness". Folly was not an explanation that a tribunal of the Church could easily accept and the investigators considered that men who did not submit their actions to the light of day must have something disgraceful to hide. The outcome of the enquiry was communicated to the king. Edward was deeply interested in the proceedings, but he felt it better that he should not be too closely identified with them. The bishops, he agreed, might deal with the prisoners according to the canons of the Church, but the king absolutely forbade the use of torture.

The papal commissioners, the bishops of London and Winchester and other prelates opened a new enquiry in January, 1310. They produced the papal Bull in which the charges against the Templars were specified, declared that de Molay, the Grand Master, had confessed to some of the graver crimes, and tried to induce the brethren to admit that the accusations were denied only because every Templar had sworn a great oath never to reveal the secrets of the Order. The enquiry was designed not to prove the guilt of individual

¹ The chapters were probably held secretly in the early days of the Temple to prevent the leakage of information regarding military operations, and the practice survived when the origin was forgotten.

Templars, but to collect evidence that the Rule of the Order contained heretical teachings. Forty prisoners, including William de la More, the Grand Preceptor of England, were examined. All proved steadfast in rebutting the charges. Asked if the Master had pardoned them for their sins, the prisoners explained that at the end of a chapter the Master absolved them for their offences against discipline, or sometimes begged the brethren to pray to God for the absolution of an offender; none of the brethren had ever known a superior of the Order give absolution in the form adopted by priests. The examinations which took place in various churches in London lasted until June. There were frequently considerable intervals between the sessions, as the papal inquisitors went to Lincoln and York to assist at the questioning of the prisoners in those towns. The provincial Templars were as staunch in their denials as the brethren in the capital. In all 228 Templars and seventy-two outside witnesses were heard. The outside witnesses who testified against the Temple were principally members of the Dominicans and Franciscans and other religious organisations which had long been antagonistic to the Temple.

In view of the lack of confessions and of trustworthy testimony, the investigators could not condemn the Order as guilty of most of the charges specified in the papal Bulls. They were satisfied, however, that the Grand Preceptor and other high officers had given absolution, that the brethren had sworn an oath to work for the aggrandisement of the Order by fair means or foul, and that no Templar was permitted to confess to priests other than those of the Order. They confirmed that the chapters were held in secret—which was never in doubt—and that the form of reception was the same everywhere. Whether the reception was heretical or indecent, they did not say, pointing out that no reliable evidence could be obtained since the brethren were vowed to

secrecy and no outside witnesses had ever been present at a reception.

Such a report did not please the Pope. He had promised Philip the Fair that he would break the Temple, and he was anxious to collect proof that the abuses were universal. For if the confession of heretical practices was confined to France, there would naturally be a suspicion that the admissions were false or wrung by torture. Even if that suspicion could be combated, Clement would find it difficult to induce the general council of the Church to condemn the whole Order merely on the evidence of irregularities in Philip's kingdom. For in such circumstances the proper course would clearly be to cleanse the French branch, not to visit the sins of one part of the Order on the fraternity throughout Christendom.

Clement protested sharply against the attitude towards the Templars in England. He was annoyed with the king as well as the English Church. Edward had been ordered to seize the possessions of the Temple and hold them for the papacy, but he had applied them to his own use and distributed some of the lands to his barons. Even when Clement sent commissioners to take charge of the property, Edward would surrender only part of it. He informed the Pope that he would deal with the other goods in a manner acceptable to God. This was much too ambiguous for Clement, who, in any case, resented the implication that anyone but himself should interpret the divine command. After a great deal of wrangling, Clement imposed his will, and Edward gave up most of the property of the Temple. The Pope also pressed him to withdraw the prohibition against torture. "The use of torture has, we understand, been forbidden in the process against the Order and the knights", wrote the Pope. "Ponder well, my dear son, whether that is honourable to you or to the good of your kingdom". Edward had reluctantly to give way on this second point, and torture was authorised provided that there were "no mutilations nor

incurable wounds nor violent effusion of blood". The English bishops were as opposed as their sovereign to torture. The tribunal of York plaintively demanded by whom the torture was to be inflicted since torture had hitherto been unknown in England. Should the torturers be laymen or priests, and would they be sent from the Continent? Clement settled this difficulty by despatching tried torturers. And so torture in a legal process was introduced into England.

Most of the Templars imprisoned at Lincoln, York and the Tower were transferred to the custody of the sheriffs of London, and orders were issued that the prisoners should be kept in solitary confinement and loaded with chains. The inquisitors were to have access to them at all times to put them to the question. In March, 1311, the public trial of the brethren, which had been suspended in June of the previous year, was resumed in London. Despite a winter of threats, hardship and torture, almost all the prisoners maintained their innocence of the gravest charges and confined their admissions to matters which had always been acknowledged. Frenzied efforts had been made to find outside witnesses who would testify against the Order, but none had any convincing evidence to offer. The witnesses merely repeated the scandal which had grown up around the Temple, as around every other Order, or said that they had been told, usually by someone since deceased, that such and such an abuse had been practised.

One witness understood that a certain Templar had gone over to Islam; that in Pilgrim's Castle recruits to the Order had to deny Christ; that heresy was common among the brethren in Cyprus; and that a Templar had an idol which answered questions. But he himself had no personal knowledge of the irregularities, and was not even clear how he got his information. Another witness, John of Nassingham, said that two knights had mentioned the worship of a calf by the Templars at a feast every year, but he knew nothing

beyond this tale. John de Eure, Sheriff of York, had at least direct evidence to offer. His wife had been given a book by William de la Fenne, a Preceptor of the Temple; this book taught that Christ was not the Son of God, but a malefactor crucified for his sins. De la Fenne, who was in custody, admitted giving the book to de Eure's wife but swore that he knew nothing of its contents. A priest, Walter de la Forde, deposed that another priest, William de Raynbur, had spoken to him of a terrible confession made by a Templar, Patrick Rippon. Rippon had admitted every single crime now charged against the Order. Both Raynbur and Rippon had since died, and de la Forde acknowledged that the information had come to him only after the arrest of the Templars.

A Franciscan, John Wedderal, in a written statement, deposed that he had overheard a Templar lamenting, "Alas! alas! that ever I was born, for I have denied God and become the devil's man". A knight declared that his grandfather, who had entered the Temple, was believed to have been murdered by the Templars for refusing to take part in heretical practices. The witness had no evidence whatever: he could only say that after entering the Order his grandfather, a healthy man, had died in three days. It was reasonable to assume that the brethren had murdered him! Another witness had heard a Templar deny the immortality of the soul, but he could not give the name of the Templar. A Franciscan had been told of a boy who was killed by the Templars after spying upon a chapter at which a member was received. Another Franciscan spoke of a servant who had been put to death for watching the worship of an idol by the Templars. The witness's information, however, came from a woman who had it from a man who knew of the incident only at second hand. A priest deposed that when he wished to enter the Order, a member warned him against it, saying that the Templars must swear three terrible vows,

known only to God, the devil, and the brethren. Richard de Koeffeld, a monk, had been told that all Templars must sell themselves to the devil and take so awful an oath that none dared reveal its terms. John of Donington, a Franciscan, had been told by a Templar (name not known) that the Order had four idols in England. Gasper de Nafferton, who had been a priest in the Temple for a few months, remembered that, when a new brother was received, all the doors were carefully guarded. He himself had been threatened with death if he tried to spy into the secrets of the reception. Next morning the crosses in the church had been moved from their places. Furthermore, said the witness, the new member had seemed very depressed!

Nothing more than this collection of fantastic fables was produced before the tribunal, but nevertheless the commissioners treated the worthless depositions with much solemnity. On April 22nd the bishops of London and Chichester and the inquisitors had the evidence read in the Church of the Holy Trinity in the presence of the Templars. The prisoners asked, and were granted, copies of the depositions, and given eight days to prepare their defence. On the eighth day William de la More, the Grand Preceptor, five Preceptors, two priests and twenty brothers appeared before the bishops and inquisitors and presented a statement. They were men unused to the law and had neither the money nor the opportunity to obtain the assistance of lawyers. They could not therefore attempt to make a defence, but they wished to declare the faith that they held and always had held. They believed in all the doctrines of the Roman Church. The Order of the Temple existed to conquer the Holy Land and its members were vowed to obedience, poverty and chastity, and had no connection with any heresies or iniquities. "We beg you, the representatives of our holy father the Pope, that for the love of God and for charity we should be treated as children of the Church, for we have

protected and respected the teachings of the Church and of our religion, a religion which is true, good and right. . . . We invite all Christians (except our enemies and traducers) to come forward and speak of our conduct. We are unlettered men, and if, because of our ignorance, we have said or done anything culpable, we are ready to submit ourselves to the Holy Church and suffer for our deficiencies like Him who suffered on the Cross. We beseech you, for the love of God and as you hope for salvation, to judge us as you will be judged before God."

This declaration was highly disagreeable to the tribunal. Instructions were issued that the Templars should again be subjected to torture and kept in stricter confinement to remove their obstinacy. Only two brothers and one priest were induced, by torture or bribes, to give the guilty testimony which the tribunal was so anxious to receive. Stephen de Stapelbrugge deposed on June 23rd that on his entry into the Temple he had been told to deny Jesus Christ and spit on the cross. Stephen denied Christ—with his mouth, not in his heart—and spat beside a crucifix. He declared that he had renounced his errors and he begged the mercy of the Church. Two days later Thomas Tocci de Thoroldsby deposed that Templars were forbidden to confess to priests outside the Order. He denied all the other charges; but four days later, after torture had been applied, he made a new confession. He admitted that he had renounced Christ and spat beside the cross. He had been told to spit on the figure of the Virgin Mary, but, while appearing to do so, he had actually kissed her foot! The Master of the Temple had often said in his presence that Jesus Christ was not divine and that Moslems were better than Christians. Thomas further stated that in Palestine the Templars favoured the Moslems and opposed the Christians and that priestly functions were exercised by laymen in the Order. On July 1st John de Stoke, a chaplain, deposed that some time after his reception

CHAPTER XVIII

THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS IN FRANCE

POPE CLEMENT had promised Philip that the bishops and inquisitors should have complete jurisdiction over the persons of the Templars, with the exception of Jacques de Molay and the chief officers. Tribunals were to be set up in each diocese of France with authority to absolve the innocent and the contrite and remit the other brethren to the secular power for punishment without reference to the Holy See. Of the papal commissions which investigated the guilt or innocence of the Order as an Order, the most important was that for France, which sat in Paris. This commission had no power to condemn or acquit the Temple; its function was to ascertain the truth or otherwise of the charges and present a report for the consideration of the general council of the Church in Vienne.

The composition of the Paris commission was: Gilles d'Aisselin, Archbishop of Narbonne; William de Trie, Bishop of Bayeux; William Duranty, Bishop of Mende; Raynold de Lamporte, Bishop of Limoges; Matthew of Naples, Archdeacon of Rouen and papal notary; John de Mantua, Archdeacon of Trent; and John de Montlaur, Archdeacon of Maguelonne. An eighth member, William Agerni, Provost of Aix, was appointed but did not serve. Of the seven members, Gilles d'Aisselin was one of Philip's closest confidants and had been keeper of the royal seal; he had played a prominent part in the persecution of the Templars. To avoid offending the king or the Pope, d'Aisselin frequently absented himself from the meetings of the commission on the

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excuse of pressing business elsewhere. William Duranty, Bishop of Mende, owed his bishopric to Philip's support and had previously shown himself an obedient servant of the sovereign. William de Trie, Bishop of Bayeux, was also indebted to Philip and, like the Archbishop of Narbonne, found it convenient to be occupied with other matters when the commission was dealing with embarrassing questions.

The commission proposed to take evidence on the following charges: That throughout the Temple the brethren denied God; were forced to renounce Jesus Christ as a false prophet; spat and trampled on the cross, especially on Good Friday; were given absolution for their sins by the Grand Master and other leading officers; put to death all who refused to participate in these enormities; had by their evil teaching caused recruits to flee from the Order; worshipped an idol, in the form of a cat or otherwise; wore girdles which had been in contact with this idol; were required to use every means, however infamous, to enrich the fraternity; held their chapters at night, thus giving rise to a suspicion of iniquitous practices; did not believe in the sacraments of the Church; made the chaplains omit the words of consecration; gave and received indecent kisses on reception; engaged in unnatural lusts, or were authorised to engage in them; gave insufficient hospitality and alms; had a secret Rule which had not been approved by the Holy See and which contained heretical and indecent provisions. The abuses were alleged to have existed in the Temple for at least forty years, and the commission realised the importance of proving that the depravity was not due to any one set of officers, but had continued in the Order after several changes of personnel.

A great mass of testimony was already available in the depositions taken by William Imbert and the other inquisitors. Although most of these depositions had been obtained from the Templars by torture and some had since been challenged

by the deponents as entirely or partially false, the commission intended to use the statements as the basis for their investigation. Templars who admitted the accusations were to be witnesses against the Order; Templars who denied the charges were joined as parties to the defence. While the commission was in session, all brethren involved in the proceedings were to be under the custody of Philip de Voher, Provost of Poitiers, and John de Jamville, an officer of the royal court.

On August 7th, 1309, the full commission of seven members met in the palace of the Bishop of Paris. The commissioners presented their credentials, proclaimed the authority vested in them by Pope Clement, and issued an invitation to all Templars in France who wished to defend the Order to appear on November 12th. The invitation was to be posted on cathedrals and churches and otherwise published widely for the information of the clergy and people, and special care was to be taken that Templars in custody were advised of the proceedings. When the commission sat again on November 12th, however, not a single brother came before it to defend his Order. It has been suggested that over-zealous gaolers wished to prevent the Templars from giving testimony, or that Philip the Fair and his ministers deliberately withheld the news of the commission's invitation from the prisoners. Neither explanation seems credible. The Templars were distributed among a number of prisons, and it is highly unlikely that the gaolers of all the prisons were in league. Philip and his ministers for their part had nothing to gain by keeping the Templars in ignorance, as it was obvious that the commissioners would be suspicious if no defenders came forward. Other suggestions are that the Templars feared to offend the king by venturing to defend the Order, that no arrangements had been made for the transport of the brethren, and that the Templars thought the new tribunal merely intended to review the evidence already

tendered. The probability is that a genuine mistake arose and that, owing to a misunderstanding of the purpose of the commission, the Templars failed to realise the nature of the investigation.

The commissioners re-issued their proclamation and instructed the Bishop of Paris personally to charge himself with bringing the matter to the attention of de Molay and other leading officers in custody in Paris. They and the other Templars were to have it clearly explained to them that this was a process against the Order, that all who wished to defend their organisation would have every facility to do so and be allowed to appear in person before the commission in Paris, no matter in what part of the kingdom they were imprisoned. The Bishop of Paris reported ten days later that the Templars in his diocese were now fully aware of the task of the commission and that a number of them whom he had interviewed were willing to defend the Order.

The first witness examined by the papal commission was John de Melot. He had been a member of the Order ten years previously, but it was not apparent whether he had left it of his own accord or been expelled. His testimony consisted of a rambling discourse in which he said that, while he had no knowledge of any evil in the Temple, he did not wish to appear in its defence. He was prepared to accept the guidance of the commission in all things, but prayed that he should be properly fed. His confused statement showed mental derangement and the commissioners ordered de Melot's removal from the court. Six Knights Templars then appeared, and their spokesman, Gerald de Caus, offered to submit to any questions. As the knights obviously thought that they were to be tried as individuals, the commissioners carefully explained that they were investigating the Order and that, while willing to hear the six prisoners, there was no obligation on any man to give evidence. The knights consulted together and replied that, as they lacked the training

and talent to take part in a legal process of the kind, they begged to be excused.

Following them came Hugh de Payraud, Visitor of the Temple in France. He reminded the commissioners that he had confessed before William Imbert, the Grand Inquisitor, and again before the cardinals at Chinon, and he offered to answer any questions arising out of these confessions. As he had already sworn that the crimes charged against the Temple were general throughout the fraternity, he could not defend the Order. He asked to be taken before the Pope and protested that the possessions of the Temple were being ill-used. As these possessions were contributed for the cause of the Holy Land, he pleaded, they should be conserved for that purpose. Unlike de Payraud, Ponsard de Gisi offered to defend the Order, and described all the charges as untrue. He had made guilty admissions at an examination before the Inquisition, but he claimed that these admissions were drawn from him by torture and were false. His hands had been tied behind his back so tightly that the blood flowed from the tips of his fingers and in this state he had been left for an hour.

On November 26th the commission heard Jacques de Molay at his own request. Although de Molay had twice confessed and been absolved by the cardinals at Chinon, he now declared his innocence. He had felt himself helpless in the grip of Philip the Fair, and had despaired of escaping from the net in which the king had snared him. The commission, however, was directly responsible to the Pope, and de Molay believed that at last, after two years in prison, he had a chance to escape from the toils. He was still in the hands of Philip's servants (although technically in the custody of the Church), but the Grand Master apparently had faith that the commission would protect him from the king. Many other Templars had also taken courage when they learned of the appointment of the papal representatives, and de Molay was only one of the very large number who denied the truth

of their previous testimony, declared themselves innocent of the charges, and contested the accusations that the Order was heretical and immoral. The attitude of the commission during its sessions encouraged the confidence of the prisoners. There was an attempt to be fair in questioning, and members often intervened to help witnesses to express themselves and to save them from bullying. Some of the commissioners were not impartial, but the commission as a whole seemed determined to ascertain the truth rather than force confessions of guilt.

In his previous examinations, Jacques de Molay had cowered before his questioners, but when he appeared before the commission he conducted himself like a haughty prince dealing with insolent inferiors. "I challenge your jurisdiction over the Order of the Temple", he answered, when asked if he wished to defend the Order. "As it is under the authority of the Pope, he alone can be its judge. The Order which is accused of such grave crimes was confirmed by Pope Honorius, and, through the holiness of its members, was accorded great privileges by Pope Alexander III. Whether the members are no longer worthy of these privileges, whether they have failed in their duty, only the Pope can decide, and it is for him to make enquiry." The Grand Master could neither read nor write and he protested that it was unfair to expect him to undertake the defence when he had no opportunity to prepare for such a duty or to consult his brethren. Was the matter so trifling, were the charges so unimportant that the process should be rushed like this? He reminded the commissioners of the case of Frederick, Emperor of Germany, who, when charged by the papacy with great crimes against the Church, had been allowed ample time to prepare his defence, and on whom judgment was suspended for thirty-two years! "I have neither the knowledge nor ability to enable me adequately to present a defence, yet I shall do my best. For I should be a poor creature and rightly reviled as such

by all men were I to hesitate to offer myself as a defender of the Order which has given me so many honours and advantages. It would indeed be the act of a coward and an ingrate to abandon the cause of my noble Order. I realise the difficulties which face me, I realise how helpless I am—a man who is the prisoner of the Pope and the king and who has no more money than a single shilling. I ask that I should have funds to enable me to conduct my defence. Let me be given aid and counsel so that I may meet the charges. Not only can the members of the Temple show the falsity of the accusations, but the kings, the princes, the prelates, the dukes, the counts, the barons all over the world will testify in its favour. . . . I am prepared to assist in the depositions and examinations of the kings, princes, prelates, dukes, counts, barons and clergy and all honest men.”

The commissioners were taken aback at this outburst, and there was a buzz of excitement and indignation among Philip's officers who crowded the court. The Archbishop of Narbonne spoke sternly to de Molay: “You would be well advised to consider your offer to defend the Order, especially in view of the confessions which you have made implicating both the Order and yourself. Yet, if you persist in your intention, we will accept you as a defender. Since you have only one brother with you, and he a layman,¹ we cannot refuse to grant you an interval for reflection. It is my duty to tell you, however, that you can expect neither funds nor the assistance of counsel. This is a question of heresy, in which we do not need the forms of law or the advice of counsel. Therefore think carefully of your position”. De Molay answered that nothing would make him desist from the defence, and the Archbishop thereupon ordered the charges against the Temple to be read out, together with several other documents, including the confession alleged to have been made by the Grand Master at Chinon. During the reading,

¹ De Molay was accompanied only by his cook.

de Molay showed signs of great indignation and crossed himself several times. He seemed to be struck with amazement during the repetition of his confession, perhaps because it had been falsified, perhaps because, having made it under a vow of secrecy and been promised that its contents would be communicated only to the Pope, he felt betrayed that his words should be published in open court.

As soon as the recital ended, the Grand Master cried out that the rulers of the Church were protected from the wrath of man, but not from the wrath of God. Were such charges made by laymen, he would know how to deal with them. The commissioners interpreted this as a challenge to fight, and replied sharply that they were not there to receive challenges. "I did not mean that", said de Molay, "but I wish it was the custom here, as it is among the Saracens and Tartars, to cut off the heads of perjurers". The commissioners again enquired whether de Molay still desired to defend the Order, and the Archbishop of Narbonne pointed out that the Church handed obstinate heretics over to the temporal arm for punishment. This was said so meaningly that de Molay became nervous and confused. Among Philip's officers in court was William de Plasian, and the Grand Master, who had been intimate with him and trusted his judgment, asked that they should be allowed to consult privately at this point. De Plasian had played a highly important part in the arrest of the Templars. He was disturbed at this unexpected resistance on the part of de Molay, not only because of what the Grand Master might reveal, but because of the moral effect on the other prisoners of a spirited defence by their chief. He welcomed the opportunity to talk over de Molay and during the discussion in an adjoining room he tried to induce the Grand Master to abandon the defence. At least, he urged, de Molay should give himself time for reconsideration, and he persuaded him to ask for an adjournment. The commissioners granted a

respite of two days and the Grand Master was removed in custody.

On November 28th de Molay appeared before the commissioners for the second time, and the question was repeated: Did he wish to defend the Order?

De Molay: From the letters you read to me, I know that the Pope has reserved myself and the other great officers of the Order for his own judgment and I therefore refuse to enter any defence before this commission. I demand to be led before his Holiness. I shall defend the Order from the wicked and false accusations made by its enemies and render to Christ the honour that is due to him. Like everyone else, I have only a mortal span of years, and perhaps little time remains for me to say what I have to say. Let the Pope call me before him without delay and, so far as in me lies, I shall defend the Order to the glory of God and His Church.

Court: It is true that his Holiness has reserved you for his own judgment, and we are not concerned with you as an individual. But we are empowered to investigate the Order as a whole, and we ask whether you will defend it?

De Molay: I decline to make any defence before you; but lest it be said I concur in the truth of the charges against the Order, I wish to ask you to think of the reputation and deeds of the Temple. There is no Order with richer churches and more beautiful religious relics, vessels and ornaments, or in whose churches the services are conducted with more dignity and reverence by the priests. There is no Order which is more generous with its charity, for the Rule of the Order requires alms to be given thrice a week in every preceptory. There is no Order which has fought more tenaciously and courageously and shed

its blood more freely in Palestine to protect the Catholic faith.

Court: All these things are highly meritorious, but without faith they are nothing.

De Molay: The faith of the Order is pure and steadfast. I declare that I believe in God, in the Trinity and in all the other teaching of the Catholic Church. I believe in one God, one faith, one baptism, one church. I believe that when the soul is separated from the body in death, there comes the judgment and then what is good and what is evil will be revealed. These things I believe. That is my faith—it is the faith of the Order of the Temple.

William de Nogaret (Chancellor of France and the chief persecutor of the Temple): The corruption in the Order is notorious. It is stated in the Chronicles of St. Denis that the Grand Master Beaujeu and other Templars did homage to the Sultan and that when the Templars were defeated, the Sultan blamed their defeat on their vice and sodomy and the betrayal of their faith.

De Molay: Never in my life have I heard such things said. They are lies. An alliance between the Sultan and the Temple was made when William de Beaujeu was Master, but nothing else could be done if the land was to be saved, and it was not a guilty alliance. It is true that some of the younger men of the Order objected, but that was through ignorance.

After begging that he should be allowed to hear mass and take part in the sacraments—a request which the commissioners promised to try to have granted—de Molay was again removed from court, and did not appear again until the spring (March 2nd). He was then asked for the third time if he wished to defend the Order. De Molay repeated that as he was reserved for the judgment of the Pope, the

tribunal was incompetent to examine him. The commissioners explained once more that, while they admitted they could not proceed against him as an individual, they were authorised to investigate the affairs of the Temple and their question was whether de Molay wished to defend the Order or not. De Molay contented himself with saying that he could not speak except before the Pope and begging the commissioners to obtain him an early interview with Clement.

The Grand Master had shown much more courage than in his previous examinations, but he had made a grave mistake in refusing to defend the Order. He repeated monotonously that he could only be judged by the Pope, and either could not or would not understand that there were two distinct processes, one relating to the Order, the other relating to the persons of the Templars, and that the commission was concerned with the first alone. The Grand Master had been badly advised by William de Plasian, but the president of the commission, the Archbishop of Narbonne, had perhaps an even greater responsibility for de Molay's error. For when, on his first appearance, de Molay wished to defend the Order, the Archbishop did his best to frighten him by explaining that relapsed heretics, in which category he placed the Grand Master, would be handed over to the secular arm. But the commission had no authority to deal with a single Templar, and Narbonne's remark was intended to mislead de Molay.

The Grand Master had appeared for the third time only after an interval of several months. This was because the commission suspended its sessions from November, 1309, until the middle of February. When it resumed its deliberations (February 14th), over six hundred and fifty prisoners were in Paris or the vicinity. Although many of them had already made confessions of guilt and all of them were submitted to Philip's gaolers, five hundred and forty-six offered to defend the Order, and the number of defenders

mounted to about seven hundred soon afterwards. The Templars had not lost their fear of the king's myrmidons, but they put their trust in the representatives of the Pope to save them from Philip's vengeance. Hope ran high in the prisons and most of the prisoners revoked their confessions. Two and a half years of captivity in filthy cells where they were starved and tortured had not completely cowed them. It had been dinned into their ears that the Pope was convinced of their guilt, but they had never quite believed that Clement would desert them. Now, they repeated, the Pope had intervened on their behalf and the Church would not tyrannise over those who had served it so faithfully.

Each Templar was in turn brought before the commission and asked whether he wished to defend the Order, and, if he replied in the affirmative, was joined as a party to the process. In this preliminary examination, the brethren were to confine themselves to expressing their willingness or otherwise as defenders, but some of them could not restrain themselves and shouted out that they would never admit the charges, that they would protect the Order till death, that they regretted nothing except the lies they had told, and so on.

One prisoner said he had been tortured by fire until the bones fell from his feet; and he dramatically produced the bones before the astonished court. Another said that twenty-five Templars had died in his prison, mostly under torture. A third said that for twelve weeks he had been allowed only bread and water. A brother produced a letter purporting to be from Philip de Vohet, one of the officers appointed by the commission to take charge of the prisoners. The Pope, read the letter, had decided that all Templars who withdrew their confessions of guilt should be put to death. De Vohet was called before the commission and said that he did not think he had seen the letter. When the commissioners pointed out that it bore his seal, he replied that a cleric sometimes had charge of the seal. There were many complaints,

but the brethren were comparatively cheerful during this part of the process. They had recovered their faith in the Pope and believed that at last they would receive justice.

The five hundred and forty-six prisoners who had offered to defend the Temple were assembled in the garden of the Bishop of Paris on March 28th. They were told that the Grand Master and other leaders had confessed to a number of the crimes, and the complete indictment against the Order was read out in Latin. As many of the brethren could not understand Latin, a lawyer began to read a translation in French. He was stopped by a howl of anger. The Templars who knew Latin had explained some of the charges to their comrades, and the brethren shouted out that they would not permit such horrible and unfounded accusations to be repeated in French. When the excitement had blown over, the procedure which the commission proposed to follow was explained to the prisoners. The defenders were to choose a few members to act as their representatives before the court. Every facility would be granted to such representatives to conduct the defence and lawyers would go round all the prisons to ascertain the names of the members by whom the Templars wished to be represented.

The prisoners were suspicious when asked to choose representatives. Some thought it was a trap, others that the appointment of representatives was dangerous as such representatives might be induced to betray the Order. The principal objection was that the Templars still regarded themselves as under the command of the Grand Master, and they claimed that only he could authorise them to act collectively. This objection was placed before the court. When the commissioners replied that the Grand Master and other leaders refused to defend the Order, the prisoners expressed their disbelief, and when assured that de Molay would not speak except before the Pope they begged to be led before their leader. The commissioners patiently

explained the powers conferred on them and warned the brethren that this might be their last chance to put forward a defence. After much discussion, a number of the Templars agreed on two priests and two knights of the Order to represent them. The knights, William de Chambonnet and Bertrand de Sartiges, took a very minor part in the proceedings, but the priests, Peter de Boulogne, last Preceptor of the Temple at Rome, and Reynald de Pruino, Preceptor of Orleans, were remarkable men. Both had confessed to some of the charges in examination by the Inquisition, but had since retracted. They conducted the defence of the Temple before the commission with tenacity, ingenuity and considerable eloquence. Peter de Boulogne especially is a highly interesting character. He appeared before the court on April 7th and, acting as spokesman for the other representatives, entered a vigorous protest against the whole process. That the Templars had consented to plead must not, he said, be taken to imply that they acknowledged the jurisdiction of the commission or waived their undoubted right to appeal to the Pope and a general council of the Church. If he and the other brethren were brought before Clement, they could easily show the falsity of the charges, by oral testimony and by unimpeachable documentary proof. But before such a trial, the Templars ought in equity to be given their liberty and permitted to use the possessions of the Temple so that their case could be adequately prepared. "Each and all of us declare the accusations to be utterly unfounded", went on de Boulogne. "It is unbelievable that such scandalous charges should be taken seriously by anyone. It is true that some Templars have admitted them, but only because of torture and suffering." De Boulogne offered to prove the use of torture and referred to the fact that thirty-six Templars had died in the prisons of Paris alone. Every law had been violated, and the Templars had been treated worse than convicted criminals. Forged letters had been

circulated, men had been bribed to make wicked confessions, and many depositions had been falsified. There had been much talk of secret statutes which authorised the awful crimes so absurdly charged against the Order. Where were those secret statutes? He had never seen them, nor had the commissioners or anyone else. No such depraved Rule existed. There was only one Rule—a Rule that was pure in every way and free from any iniquity or excess. The Templars, de Boulogne reminded the court, were accused of denying Christ. Let the court remember how many thousands of brethren had died in the East rather than renounce their Saviour.

He then presented a statement to the commission. After representing that the Order was answerable to the Pope alone and that the confessions made before Philip's seneschals and the inquisitors were irregular, the statement pointed out that confessions of guilt had been obtained only in France. If the Templars had to meet a case, the proper course was for the accusers to be presented for examination. No accusers, however, had been brought forward for questioning, and the indictment rested upon the work of the envious, unworthy and evilly-disposed. The court was begged to exclude all laymen from the hearings, and especially the royal officers, whose presence terrified witnesses for the defence. "The Order of the Temple was founded in honour of the Virgin, mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the defence of the Christian faith, the protection of the Holy Land, and the fight against the enemies of the cross—that is, the Saracens, the infidels, or the pagans, principally in the Holy Land of Jerusalem, which the Son of God, in dying for our salvation, has consecrated with His own blood. It was established by the Pope, and is an Order free from iniquity of any kind; it has always subscribed to the teaching of the Church, and has been approved, confirmed and honoured with many privileges by the Apostolic See. Four things are required of

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those who enter the Order; obedience, chastity, poverty, and service to the Holy Land—that is, they must devote all their energies to the conquest of the Holy Land, and, should God permit its conquest, to the defence of the Holy Land.” Recruits were given the kiss of peace on their reception and taught the Rule of the Temple, a Rule which had been submitted to the Church and approved by it. No more was asked of any Templar, and whoever said otherwise was a liar and an enemy of religion.

The Archbishop of Narbonne promised that this statement would be forwarded to the Pope. He remarked that the Templars seemed to think they should be treated like innocent men, and he reminded them that the Pope had, in a Bull, pronounced many of the charges to be definitely proved. The request that the prisoners should be given the use of the property of the Order was not for the commissioners to consider. The commission was charged only to investigate the accusations against the Order. The Templars could depose in perfect security, and the gaolers would be specially instructed to treat the prisoners humanely.

So far there had been only preliminary hearings to ascertain which of the brethren would defend the Order. The trial proper did not begin until Saturday, April 11th. It opened in the Episcopal Hall of Paris. Most of the witnesses heard in the first sessions had confessed to one or more of the charges before the Inquisition, and de Boulogne again protested vigorously that it was manifestly unfair to produce these confessions. The commissioners overruled the objection and decided that previous depositions should be read in court. Witnesses would, however, be allowed to retract their confessions if they wished.

Nearly all the witnesses brought before the commission in the first few days were outsiders who testified against the Order or Templars who adhered to previous confessions of guilt. These witnesses were in effect the witnesses for the

prosecution. A secular knight, Raoul de Prael, said that he had heard Gervais, Prior of Laon, hint at an awful secret in the Temple which he dared not reveal to any man. The next witness, Nicolas Domizelli, was also a non-Templar. He deposed that his uncle, a Templar, had made a similar statement about Gervais; the witness had applied for membership of the Order to this Gervais, but had been rejected. The third witness, John of St. Benedict, a prior of the Temple, was on his death-bed and asked that the commissioners should attend him to take a statement. He admitted that he had denied Christ and spat on the cross at his reception, but said he had no knowledge that other Templars did so. Guiscard de Marsiac, a secular knight, repeated rumours that he had heard of evil practices among the Templars in France, Spain and Italy. He had known a man who became a Templar and had spoken about terrible iniquities in the Order. John de Taillefer, a serving brother who had left the Order, admitted all the accusations, including the adoration of an idol, but in examination he could give few particulars. The following witness, also a renegade from the Order, confessed that he had denied Jesus Christ thrice and spat on the crucifix when received into the Temple. Asked why he had done so, he replied that he understood it to be the practice.

After this witness had been heard, de Boulogne, de Pruino, de Chambonnet and de Sartiges presented another protest to the court (April 23rd). They again asked that all confessions made under torture should be ruled inadmissible and claimed that, as representatives of the defenders, they should be provided with a list of witnesses. They drew attention to the presence of the king's ministers in court and demanded the exclusion of all the royal officers. The depositions before the commission were common property, they said, and when some men confessed, others might become afraid to persevere in the defence. To the request that the depositions should be kept secret and that those who had testified should be

imprisoned separately from those who had not yet been heard, the commissioners gave a refusal. They noted the other points in the protest, and promised to consider them.

When the proceedings were resumed on the following day, the witnesses were mostly members of the Order. Hugh de Buris admitted the denial of Jesus Christ, spitting and idolatry. Asked to describe the idol, he said it was a head with a long beard. He contested the allegation that the brethren were permitted to engage in unnatural relations. Gerard de Passage deposed that he had been admitted to the Order in Cyprus but had left it five years ago. On his reception, he had been given a crucifix and told that it was nothing but a piece of wood. He admitted spitting on the cross and giving indecent kisses. Fearful tortures had been inflicted on him in prison. A serving brother, Geoffrey de Tatan, admitted the main charges, including the denial of Christ, spitting on the cross, and indecent kisses. On May 6th appeared Raymond de Vassiniac, who confessed to indecency. He had abjured his errors, cut off his beard, and wore secular garb. Baldwin de St. Just, Prior of Ponthieu, admitted most of the accusations, but thought that the practice of the Temple varied in different countries. Gilbert d'Encray, a servant, had refused to deny Jesus Christ on entry into the Order and, when told to give an indecent kiss, had avoided it. He admitted that unnatural vices had been mentioned to him. Jacob de Troyes, another servant, confessed to the main charges, but had never seen the idol, though he had heard of it.

This evidence for the prosecution was on the whole most untrustworthy, and the commissioners had been suspicious of certain of the witnesses who violently assailed the Order. The hundreds of defenders were still to be heard, and they were not discouraged by the testimony already presented to the court. De Boulogne and the other representatives carried cheerful reports to the prisons, and assured the brethren that

the Order would be fully justified before the end of the process.

And probably it would have been if Philip the Fair had not intervened. The king and his advisers were disturbed by the proceedings of the commission. They had never been happy about its appointment, but had hoped that, when three of its members were creatures of Philip, the commission could be guided and that the process would be merely an empty formality. Several of the commissioners, however, exhibited a spirit of independence and made an honest effort to establish the truth. They tried to preserve a judicial calm, would permit no interference, and were apparently ready to hear every one of the hundreds of Templars, no matter how long the enquiry was extended. Philip gave hints, but they had no effect on the conduct of the commission, and the king became alarmed as well as indignant. His case rested on the guilty depositions of the Templars, but every day more and more prisoners were retracting their earlier testimony and declaring that they and the Order were guiltless. Unless something was done, the commission would have a mass of evidence in favour of the Temple and Philip's plans would thus be entirely ruined.

But the king had not come so near to success to let it slip from him because of the obstinacy of a few churchmen appointed by the Pope to form a commission. Philip and de Marigny had handled much more difficult problems, and they soon found the solution to this unforeseen threat to their rapacious and ambitious schemes. The Templars who had gone back on their previous admissions believed themselves protected from the wrath of the king. They had, however, under-estimated the astuteness of Philip the Fair, and they were now to pay for the mistake with their blood.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRIAL OF THE TEMPLARS (*continued*)

THE archbishopric of Sens had become vacant shortly before, and been reserved by the Pope for his own nominee. Philip, however, had other views. One of his most trusted ministers, Enquerrand de Marigny, was the brother of Philip, Bishop of Cambrai, and the king pressed the claims of this candidate. The Pope protested that Philip de Marigny was too young for the honour and lacked the experience, if not the ability, to succeed to so great an archbishopric; but the papacy had to give way in this, as in so many other matters, and in April, 1310, Philip de Marigny was installed in Sens. The importance of the appointment was that Sens had the Bishop of Paris as one of his suffragans, and consequently exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the capital.¹ The Templars of Paris were therefore now in the hands of a man entirely in the king's power. By papal decree, judgment on individual Templars was left absolutely to local ecclesiastical tribunals. The implication was that the tribunals of the Church would not take action until the papal commission had reported, but this had never been definitely laid down. The best way to stop the Templars from defending the Order was to terrorise them; and what could be simpler than to make the Archbishop of Sens summon a provincial council to condemn the brethren before they gave evidence to the commission?

Philip de Marigny lost no time in obeying his master's command. Within a month of his installation as Archbishop of Sens he summoned his council to meet him at Paris to decide the guilt of Templars in his province, especially those

¹ Sens also embraced Chartres, Orleans and Meaux.

who had offered themselves as defenders of the Order. The news that the council had been convoked for Monday, May 11th, reached the Templars only on the previous day. It spread quickly round the prisons, and de Boulogne, de Pruino, de Chambonnet, and de Sartiges immediately demanded to be heard by the commissioners. The commission did not normally sit on Sunday, but the request was granted and the four representatives made their protest before a special session of the court. "The Pope", said de Boulogne, "has set up this commission to investigate the Order of the Temple, and all Templars who wish to defend the Order have been invited to appear before you. Many of the brethren have offered themselves as defenders. We are now advised, however, that the Archbishop of Sens has summoned his council for to-morrow to take action against those Templars who have offered to appear for the defence. This can only be for the purpose of preventing them from being heard in defence of the Order". The Archbishop of Narbonne and the Bishop of Trent, two members of the commission most closely associated with the French court, thought it politic to retire from the tribunal at this stage on the excuse of urgent business—the Archbishop found that he had to celebrate mass.

The other members of the commission, after consultation, replied to de Boulogne that they had no authority over the Archbishop of Sens, but were willing to hear the protest which the Templars had drawn up. De Boulogne then read a long statement: "We are told that the Archbishop and his suffragans have decided to re-open proceedings against the Templars. As, however, we have been accepted as defenders of the Order before this commission, we claim that, until the commission has completed its enquiry, the Archbishop of Sens is not entitled to proceed against individual Templars. We claim that we are under the protection of this commission, and we ask that the Archbishop should be restrained. His action is irregular and unfair, and will make it impossible for

the commission to fulfil its labours". The statement pointed out that as the Templars were pleading before the commission, they could not reasonably be expected to plead also before the tribunal of Sens at the same time. After further consultation, the commission repeated that they had no jurisdiction over the provincial councils. The Pope had appointed the Archbishops to be the judges of individuals while the functions of the commission were confined to the investigation of the charges against the Order as a whole. De Boulogne and the other representatives retired, but in the afternoon they were before the commission again. The commissioners, however, could only confirm that the Archbishop of Sens acted within his powers and that the commission had no authority to interdict him. "We are deeply grieved for you", the court told the representatives, "but since the Pope has sanctioned the proceedings before provincial councils, we are quite powerless to interfere in any way."

On the following day, Monday, the commission resumed the hearing of witnesses. Humbert de Puy, a serving brother, denied all the charges. He had heard tales of irregularities in the Order, but he swore that they were the lies of jealous and evilly-disposed persons. The next witness, John Bertaldi, also a servant, admitted the denial of Christ, spitting on the cross and indecent kisses. In the middle of his examination, the session was suspended to consider the proceedings of the Archbishop of Sens. He had held his provincial council and acted tempestuously. The Pope had decreed that Templars already questioned by the Inquisition need not be further examined except at the discretion of the councils, and Philip de Marigny had taken full advantage of this decision. The fate of the Templars within his jurisdiction was settled forthwith. The prisoners were divided into four classes: —

(1) Those who had confessed to lesser offences—the tribunal ordered them to be given their freedom after penance.

(2) Those who had admitted more heinous crimes—the tribunal ordered them to be kept in prison for varying periods.

(3) Those who had not made any confession of guilt—the tribunal ordered them to spend the remainder of their lives in prison.

(4) Those who had made guilty confessions but had subsequently retracted them—they were to be handed over to the temporal arm to be put to death.

The last class included those Templars who, after acknowledging some or all of the charges, had offered to defend the honour of the Order before the papal commission. Such men, said the Archbishop, had condemned themselves by their retractions. They had confessed that they were heretics and now, by recanting, they had shown themselves to be still heretics. The Church had no alternative but to treat these abandoned men as relapsed and impenitent. There was no suggestion that the men who had made admissions through torture and then retracted when they felt themselves to be under the protection of the Pope might be innocent, and no investigation of any kind was carried out by the Sens council. Fifty-four Templars were degraded and handed over to Philip to be given to the flames.

The papal commissioners were stupefied when they learned of this drastic judgment, and at once despatched the Archdeacon of Orleans and Philip de Vohet to the Archbishop of Sens. These emissaries were to inform Philip de Marigny that the representatives of the prisoners had lodged a protest against his proceedings, and that, if the Council of Sens condemned individual Templars, the work of the papal commission would be rendered useless, since the prisoners would be too terrified to speak freely. The Archbishop returned that he had no wish to intervene in the process before the commission. He had, however, authority to deal with the persons of Templars.

That authority had been conferred on him, as on other Archbishops, by the Pope, and he could not admit any interference with his undoubted rights.

Early next morning the so-called relapsed heretics were led to the Porte St. Antoine, where fifty-four stakes had been erected. Great efforts were made to induce the prisoners to adhere to their original confessions and admit their guilt. The king had been willing to spare the Templars so long as he could bring about the abolition of the Temple and seize its property. Though now incensed against individual members because of their determined opposition, he was still prepared to pardon them if they would testify that the Order was heretical and thus give him evidence with which to force the Pope to condemn the Temple. None of the Templars, however, accepted the offer. The mantle of the Order was torn from them and each Templar was bound to the stake. A royal officer made a last appeal to the victims to save their lives by admitting their guilt, and relatives of the fifty-four Templars, some of whom belonged to the greatest families in France, added their pleas. Every Templar remained resolute. The stakes were set alight, but even when the flames leapt around them, the Templars could be heard maintaining their innocence. Other executions followed. Nearly a hundred and twenty Templars were burned in Paris as relapsed heretics, and only two of those led to the stake recanted their declarations and saved their lives by acknowledging the crimes charged against the Order. There is a legend that the cross worn by some of the burned Templars shone with a strange light and defied the flames.

On the day after the first batch of executions, the papal commission re-opened its examination. Aymeric de Villars, a Templar aged fifty, was the first witness. He had seen fifty-four brethren led to the stake, and he was shaking with fright. During the questions, he raised his hands to heaven, beat his chest, threw himself on his knees. He had admitted several

charges to the inquisitors, but he cried out that he had only made this false confession after being tortured three times and kept on bread and water for six months. Now he wished to retract everything. "I declare that the Temple is absolutely pure. . . . I have seen fifty-four knights taken to the stake, and I am told they have been burned. I fear I could not show their courage if faced with the fire. I think I should swear to anything that was asked of me if I were threatened with the flames—I would even swear that I had killed God Himself!" He prayed the commissioners to keep his deposition secret, and was led from the court shrieking that he would be put to the torture if his gaolers knew what he had said.

Next day de Boulogne made another protest to the papal commission. In a written statement he declared the executions of the Templars to be illegal, and demanded, for the fourth time, that the brethren should be brought before the Pope and given the use of their property to prepare a defence. The commissioners received the statement, but hesitated to risk another rebuff from the Archbishop of Sens by renewing their complaint. Four days later, however, the provincial council of Sens summoned de Pruino before it, and the commissioners could not overlook this flagrant breach of faith. If even the representatives of the prisoners were to be judged by the Sens council then the position of the commission became quite hopeless. The commissioners pointed out to the Archbishop that de Pruino, as a representative of the defence, ought to be exempt from trial until the papal commission had finished its enquiry. Philip de Marigny returned a sharp rejoinder. He had been told to deal with the Templars and he was doing no more than his duty. Nothing had been said to him about waiting for the termination of the labours of the commission—which, he remarked caustically, had been at work for two years—or about any exemption for the representatives of the defenders. His

council was not inclined to make any exemption. He had no wish to embarrass the commission, he concluded, but he must be permitted to act as seemed best to him.

Panic mounted among the Templars of Paris as the Council of Sens continued its work. On the day following de Pruino's trial, thirty-eight prisoners gave notice that they desisted from the defence before the commission. To defend the Order meant at least long imprisonment and perhaps death, and the commission was inundated with requests from brethren who, to escape punishment, begged to be allowed to withdraw from the process. The commissioners were helpless. Not only had the provincial councils papal authority on their side, but the commissioners knew that Philip the Fair was behind the affair. Since it was clearly impossible to continue the enquiry into the Order when the witnesses went in fear of death, the commission suspended its proceedings on May 30th for five months.

Meanwhile, the enquiry into the Order was going ahead in other countries. The King of Aragon had, with the concurrence of his nobles, ordered the arrest of all Templars in his kingdom at the end of 1307, and appointed the Grand Inquisitor and the Archbishops to examine the brethren. The Templars, however, did not mean to suffer the fate of their brethren in France and took refuge in fortified towns and castles. They were ordered to appear before an ecclesiastical council, and war was declared against them when they refused. After two years their fortresses were captured and the Templars brought to trial. Some of them confessed under torture, but most of the Templars maintained their innocence, and the council pronounced itself satisfied of the purity of the Rule of the Order. In Portugal and Castille, the Templars were seized with the same despatch and secrecy as in France and had no opportunity to make any resistance. Most of the records of the trials are lost, but it is known that a council held at Salamanca, over which the Archbishop

of Compostella presided, declared the Order innocent. In almost all the provinces of Italy, however, the Order was found guilty. Charles of Anjou, King of Naples, and cousin of Philip the Fair, had long been an enemy of the Temple. He arrested the Templars in Naples and his other territories and consigned a number of the members to the flames. The persecution was especially severe in Provence and Piedmont. In the papal states the Order was naturally venomously persecuted. In Cyprus, the king had to be pressed by the papacy to permit the use of torture. Although tortured, the seventy-five brethren who testified in Cyprus maintained the innocence of the Order and thirty-five outside witnesses had no evidence to offer against it. The trial resulted in the complete acquittal of the Temple.

The trial of the Templars in Germany was entrusted by the Pope to the Archbishops of Mentz, Treves and Magdeburg. The number of Templars in Germany was comparatively small and most of the brethren escaped capture. When an ecclesiastical assembly met at Mentz, under the Archbishop, Peter Ashpelter, to investigate the charges, Hugh de Waltgraff, a Preceptor of the Order, invaded the council chamber with twenty Knights Templars in full armour. "We are told", said Hugh to the president, "that you and the other members of this tribunal mean to use torture to extract confessions against the Temple and propose to abolish the Order of the Knights. We have given our blood for the defence of the Christian religion, and your proceedings are so manifestly unjust that we enter the strongest protest against them. Pope Clement, by whose instructions you act, is an evil and wicked tyrant. We declare him to be unlawfully elected and we appeal to his successor. We shall triumphantly prove our innocence and the innocence of the whole Order, which has been so shamefully persecuted, before a future Pope". Hugh offered a defence of Jacques de Molay, saying that he knew the Grand Master to be a

man of piety and incapable of the crimes charged against him. He and the knights were willing to undergo any form of trial by ordeal to prove the complete innocence of the Temple, and Hugh invited the council to choose all or any of them for the purpose. The council declined; its members appear to have been overawed by the Preceptor and his followers and anxious only to close the proceedings. No attempt was made to arrest the Templars. The sittings were suspended and a full report sent to the Pope, who was alarmed at the accusation that his election was illegal. The trial was not resumed at Mentz for a year. After nearly forty witnesses had been heard, the Temple was pronounced innocent and the Templars accepted as reconciled with the Church. A council under the Archbishop of Treves gave similar decisions, and the Archbishop of Magdeburg, although he tried to seize all the Templars in his territory, was compelled to declare the Order guiltless.

The proceedings in England closed inconclusively. On the evidence given before the ecclesiastical councils in London and York, the Templars could not be condemned, but the Pope had pronounced the brethren guilty, and the Archbishops could not therefore acquit the prisoners. The Archbishop of Canterbury hoped that William de la More, the Grand Preceptor of England, would rescue him from this dilemma. A bargain was suggested in the summer of 1311. If de la More would confess that he had been guilty of heresy and express his penitence for the offences, he could depend upon the utmost leniency from the Church. De la More rejected the suggestion outright, but most of his followers were not so implacable. They had been in prison for over three years. Although nothing had been proved against them by outside witnesses and only very few of the brethren had made admissions, the prisoners realised that the English Church was unable to oppose the Pope by setting them at liberty without a compromise. A solution was

found by concentrating on the absolution given by the Grand Master and other great officers at the end of the chapters. Many Templars had agreed that words of absolution were spoken, but they stressed that the absolution was only for offences against discipline and not for sins, which were invariably confessed to the chaplains. The tribunals of London and York, however, seized on the fact that any kind of absolution at all had been pronounced and claimed that the brethren had erred in permitting such a practice.

If the prisoners would frankly admit the irregularity of this absolution by their chiefs and publicly confess their detestation of the heresies charged against the Order in the papal Bulls, they would be reconciled with the Church. Almost all the Templars accepted this compromise. They appeared on the steps of St. Paul's and at other churches in London and elsewhere to make the required declaration. After doing so they were received into the bosom of the Church and ordered to undergo penance in the monasteries, from which most of them were before long discharged into civil life. De la More maintained his refusal to confess that the Order had erred in any way and died shortly afterwards in the Tower, protesting his innocence to the last. The other brethren who likewise insisted that it would be dishonourable to admit anything derogatory to the good name of the Temple were sentenced to lifelong imprisonment, but the sentence does not seem to have been carried out generally.

The Templars had also been brought to trial in Scotland and Ireland. Thirty Templars were arrested in Ireland in 1307 by the Chief Justice, John Wogan, and imprisoned at Dublin Castle. Their trial took place at St. Patrick's Church before the Dominicans, Richard Balby, Philip de Slane and Hugh St. Leger, but with one exception the prisoners maintained their innocence and the evidence against them consisted only of the usual crop of rumours. The Templars were nevertheless convicted, but were set at liberty after

varying sentences of imprisonment. The Temple was highly popular in Scotland, and all but two of the brethren found refuge against the authorities, who indeed do not seem to have been anxious to capture them. The two prisoners—the Preceptor, William of Clifton, and William of Middleton—were brought before the Archbishop of St. Andrews and John de Solerio, clerk to the Pope. Forty-one witnesses were produced against them, but the prisoners made no admission, and the evidence of the witnesses was so feeble that the court pronounced the Order innocent and released the two accused.

In Paris the papal commission resumed its deliberations on November 3rd, 1310. Only three commissioners were present, and not a single witness. For the Archbishop of Sens had proceeded with his work of handing Templars over to Philip the Fair to be fed to the flames; the Archbishop of Rheims, Robert de Courtenay, had summoned his council at Senlis, sufficiently near to Paris to strike terror into the hearts of the prisoners in the capital, and had similarly remitted Templars to the temporal arm for punishment. The provincial council of Rouen, held at Pont de l'Arche under the Archbishop (Clement's twenty-four-year-old nephew, Bernard de Farges), had also proceeded against the brethren and sent some to the stake and others to perpetual imprisonment.

Hundreds of Templars had offered to defend the Order in Paris in the spring of 1310; but the summary judgments of the councils of Sens, Senlis, and Pont de l'Arche had fulfilled their purpose. The king had planned to break the defence by terrorising the defenders through the provincial councils and he had triumphed. Those Templars who remained staunch in defence of the Order had been put to death as relapsed heretics or were now undergoing imprisonment for life. The others had admitted their guilt before the ecclesiastical councils and been reconciled with the

Church. They could not, even had they wished, be accepted as defenders of the Order.

The papal commission therefore found no defenders when it met on November 3rd. It adjourned until December 27th, but again not a single Templar offered to give evidence in favour of the Order. The commissioners summoned the two Knights Templars, William de Chambonnet and William de Sartiges, who had been appointed to represent the brethren. But the conduct of the defence had been in the hands of the two priests, de Boulogne and de Pruino, and the knights asked for their presence. That, the court gravely replied, was impossible. Both de Boulogne and de Pruino had appeared before the Council of Sens and confessed themselves guilty. De Pruino had been degraded by the council and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. He could not therefore be permitted to appear, and had in any case voluntarily withdrawn from the process. Peter de Boulogne had also been degraded and imprisoned, but had broken gaol. It is satisfactory to know that this doughty defender of the Temple escaped from the clutches of Philip the Fair.

De Sartiges and de Chambonnet had neither the ability nor the education to enable them to conduct the defence before the commission and were doubtless also afraid that, if they acted as representatives of the prisoners, they would bring swift vengeance upon themselves. Both begged to be allowed to withdraw, and the Templars were thus left without a single representative before the commission. Not that it mattered much, for nearly every brother who now gave evidence before the commission had admitted his guilt and been absolved by the Church. Including those already heard, the commissioners examined 231 witnesses, most of them servants. All the Templars knew that death or life-long imprisonment would be their fate if they retracted their guilty confessions, and the trial therefore was quite farcical.

The commission, however, went on with its work as though unaware that they were receiving the depositions of prisoners before whose eyes burned constantly the fires of Philip the Fair.

The examination was a succession of palsied witnesses, some afraid to speak at all, the majority only too anxious to show their penitence by confirming the admissions made before a council of the Church. The first witness admitted all the charges except idolatry; a chaplain confirmed a confession of guilt made before the Archbishop of Sens; another chaplain, Stephen, aged seventy-two, explained that the Receiver addressed these words to recruits: "By the oath of obedience you have sworn, I command you to spit on the cross". A servant, Tavernay, confessed to all the crimes, except permission to engage in homosexuality; his evidence was a repetition of the deposition made before the Council of Sens, which had absolved him. Beaumont, also a servant, confessed to most of the charges; he thought that the permission to the brethren to sleep together meant only that, when sleeping accommodation was short, two Templars could share one bed. The next six witnesses admitted the denial of Christ and spitting on the crucifix. One explained that when he refused to do so, the Receiver said to him, "You are the slave of the Order and these things are a proof of your submission".

John de Pollencourt trembled violently before the commission and said that, having admitted some of the charges, he was afraid now to retract. The commissioners assured him that he had the right to recant and that he would be protected. De Pollencourt then deposed that he was innocent of all the charges. Three days later, however, he asked to be heard again. Perhaps he had been tortured, perhaps he had been terrorised. Whatever the reason, he wanted to adhere to his original confession, in which he admitted the denial of Christ and spitting on the cross. He

believed that the brethren had worshipped an idol, but personally he knew nothing of the practice. The next witness was also in a state of dire fear. He wept bitterly before the commission and cried out that he was overwhelmed with grief for his sins.

A knight had been tortured in prison because he would not make any guilty admission, but now he testified that he had denied Christ on his reception. When asked by the commissioners why he had borne torture rather than speak the truth, the witness replied, "I didn't imagine that the trial would go against us". The irregularities in the Temple had, he thought, been introduced when the Order began to enrol scholars. Raoul de Ghisy confessed to the same crimes. He also said that an idol had been produced in the chapters, but he had retired when it was brought before the brethren. He had told these things to a Franciscan and had been given absolution. Hugh de Calmont had been asked to deny Christ at his reception, but had not done so. He understood that recruits were asked to deny Christ so that the Receiver could judge whether they were staunch enough in the faith to cling to Christianity even if the Moslems tried to make them renounce it. A Master of the University of Paris, to whom he gave a report of his reception, said that other Templars had made the same admission. Humbert de St. Georges had denied Christ on his reception; the Receiver had said that it was the practice, but that a man could deny Christ with his mouth and still love Him in his heart. The following fourteen witnesses also deposed that they had denied Christ and spat on the cross at their reception. Then came an outside witness, Stephen de Nercat, a Franciscan. A relative of his had joined the Temple and seemed to regret it afterwards; once he had been heard to call out that the Order was ungodly. That completed the Franciscan's evidence.

Twelve Templars, all servants, then deposed to the denial

and spitting. Another servant, William d'Arteblay, said he had seen an idol and that the leaders worshipped it. "I was told that it was the head of one of the eleven thousand virgins,¹ but I believe it was the head of a devil, for it was terrible to look upon, with two faces and a great silver beard." He thought that he would recognise the head if he saw it again, and the commissioners instructed William de Pidoye, the chief administrator of the goods of the Order, to make a stringent search for the head in the Temple of Paris. A number of witnesses who had confessed to the main charges were quickly disposed of. They had all denied Christ and spat on the cross; some had received permission to engage in unnatural lusts, others had seen or heard of an idol. Asked why they denied Christ, they said it was the Rule of the Order. The Receiver explained to some of them that they could confess and receive absolution for the denial; others had been told that the sin was not theirs, and that the responsibility rested on the leaders who introduced the practice. John de Cormilles told the commissioners that he would retract his confession of guilt if he could do so secretly, but this request was refused. Next day he admitted the main charges.

After about twenty more brethren had confessed to the denial of Christ, spitting on the cross, and indecent kisses, Raynald de Bergeron was brought before the commissioners. He admitted all the charges, including permission to indulge in homosexuality. He had not wished to take the vow of chastity, but when he explained the reason for his objection the Receiver assured him that he need not be chaste, as Templars were allowed to live with women. The following witnesses also admitted the denial of Christ and spitting, and most of them also indecent kisses and homosexuality. William de Torroges, a knight, denied the

¹ St. Ursula was put to death in 452, with eleven others, by the Huns, but legend magnified the number to 11,000.

charges; so, too, did the three servants who succeeded him, although all three had made guilty confessions in prison. Of the next thirty witnesses, only three protested their innocence, and the others admitted one or more of the charges. A servant complained that the knights treated the servants with great harshness; another servant said that the Templars were full of cupidity. A knight, Bouches, deposed that he had seen a head with a long beard which he believed was worshipped in the chapter; another Templar had been shown a small copper head at his reception and told to adore it. William de Saromine had taken it as a bad joke when told to deny Jesus Christ. Hugh de Narsac, after admitting most of the charges, accused Jacques de Molay of unnatural practices with brethren and especially his valet. A knight, de Fravaux, repeated the tale that de Molay had been chosen Grand Master through an intrigue. After a number of further witnesses had confessed to the denial and spitting came three Templars who admitted indecent kisses and homosexuality also. Bertrand de Caus said that at his reception he had been told to deny Christ, but that, before he could do so, there was a shout that the Saracens were about to attack. The brethren who had been forcing him to deny Christ thereupon all rushed out to fight under the sign of the cross! Some of the brethren had only denied Christ under promise of absolution, others had been told that no one attached any importance to the denial.

The last of the 231 witnesses was heard on May 26th, 1311. Over two hundred of the Templars admitted before the commissioners that, on entering the Order, they had been forced to deny Christ, spit on the cross, and exchange indecent kisses. About fifty confessed that homosexuality had been permitted, but almost all of them swore that it had not been practised to their knowledge. Every witness swore that he believed in the faith of the Church and that the Grand Master and other great officers had never given absolution

for sins, but only for breaches of discipline. None had known of the adoration of a cat, and only a dozen had seen or heard anything of the worship of a head. The search for an idol which had been made in the Temple of Paris after the evidence of William d'Arteblay led to the discovery of a head marked "Capud LVIII". It was the head of a woman in silver gilt, swathed in silks. The head appears to have been a religious relic and was at any rate not an idol.

After hearing the last of the witnesses, the papal commissioners sat until June 5th to consider the evidence. The Council of Vienne had been postponed by the Pope for a year until October 1st, 1311, and the commissioners had only a few months to prepare their report. They had based their investigation largely upon depositions extracted by torture, bribes and threats, but on the whole the commission had conducted its work with great fairness. The enquiry had, however, become impossible when the provincial councils of France opened their trials of individual Templars. There were two distinct phases in the papal investigation: the first, from September, 1309, to May, 1310, when seven hundred Templars, with their representatives to assist them, were eager to defend the Order; the second phase lasted from November, 1310, till June, 1311, and during it the brethren had no representatives and hardly a single Templar dared to contest the charges. Before the second phase began, 120 Templars in Paris had been taken to the stake, and most of the other defenders had cast off their mantles, shaved off their beards, and described themselves as reconciled sons of the Church and no longer connected with the Temple.

Philip the Fair had triumphed over the Templars in France by the use of the stake and turned the papal investigation into a mockery. Now the scene shifts to Vienne, where Philip was to dictate the final act of the tragedy.

CHAPTER XX

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TEMPLE

PHILIP continued to press Clement to condemn the memory of Boniface VIII as well as crush the Temple. He at length forced the Pope to institute a process against Boniface, but only after renewing his virulent campaign of vilification. The king had accused Clement of bribing some of the witnesses against Boniface to disappear, of threatening and torturing others, and even of committing murder. A number of the witnesses had died in natural course, and Philip sarcastically enquired if Clement was postponing the process in the hope that all the witnesses against Boniface would be laid in their graves.

The agreement had been made that the indictment of Boniface should be before the general council of the Church, but Clement fought that arrangement fiercely. He could no longer avoid a trial, but he insisted that it should take place before a tribunal chosen by himself and Philip gave way on the point. In February, 1311, Clement sat with a number of his cardinals to investigate the charges. Philip was represented by his best lawyers, William de Nogaret, who had seized Boniface at Anagni, and William de Plasian, who had been the most unscrupulous traducer of the dead Pope. The memory of Boniface was defended by his two nephews and a number of ecclesiastical jurists. It was a tussle between the civil lawyers of the French court and the canon lawyers of the papal court.

The defence objected to the appearance of de Nogaret and de Plasian as prosecutors on the ground that these two lawyers had been the worst enemies of Boniface and were guilty of

grave offences against the Church. De Nogaret and de Plasian in turn objected to the presence on the tribunal of several cardinals who, they claimed, were biased against France. These were only the first of the squabbles that marked the process. The charges against the dead pontiff had been repeated many times, and now Philip's representatives produced statements given under oath, and a long succession of witnesses testified that Boniface was guilty of the most monstrous crimes. It was a remarkable body of evidence, and it is significant that, although torture was said to have been used by the defence, none of the witnesses for the prosecution complained of having been tortured or coerced in any way. In the so-called trial of the Temple, Philip's ministers had shown themselves to be expert fabricators of evidence and highly successful in finding witnesses who would swear to anything and everything that was required of them. But the witnesses called by de Nogaret and de Plasian in the process against Boniface came from provinces over which Philip had no control. These witnesses may have been bought with French gold to give perjured testimony, but that is extremely unlikely, and it seems probable that the deponents sincerely believed what they said before the papal tribunal.

Yet most of the statements are almost incredible and some of them are wholly incredible. Witness after witness accused Boniface of the grossest depravity, of scoffing at the sacraments of the Church, of keeping a familiar demon, of engaging in black magic—one deponent told in great detail how Boniface had killed a cock, scattered its blood in a magic circle, and cast spells. The dead pontiff was alleged to have openly propounded the theory that immortality was a myth and recognised as such by intelligent people, although they pretended to believe in it; for the best way to keep the vulgar in subjection was to hold out the promise of a future life. Boniface, said another witness, had declared that the Virgin

Mary was no more a virgin than his own mother. He was also stated to have professed himself mightier than Christ since he could make poor men rich and powerful and cast down the greatest princes, whereas Christ had to remain lowly and despised.

As this amazing process continued, Clement became vastly alarmed. He had chosen the form of the tribunal and, if he wished, he could probably, whatever the evidence, ensure that Boniface was declared innocent. He would, however, then have to settle with Philip the Fair, the weight of whose hand he had so often felt. Yet if Boniface were condemned, it would be a tremendous blow to the papacy. The belief in the infallibility of the Pope was not directly affected since, if Boniface were in fact condemned, the Church would claim that he had been irregularly elected to the tiara and was not a true pontiff; but should Philip succeed in his process against a dead Pope, he might next proceed against a living one. Clement foresaw that, if any further disagreement broke out between him and the king, Philip would certainly threaten to arraign him as he had done Boniface. Many people held that Clement himself was illegally called to lead the Church, and his bestowal of ecclesiastical appointments and other things during his tenancy of the papal chair would not stand examination.

Something had to be done to stop further evidence from being tendered, but Clement had little hope of moving Philip. To everyone's surprise, however, the king suddenly agreed not to press for the condemnation of Boniface. The reason for Philip's withdrawal is obscure. Pressure may have been brought to bear by other princes, but Philip was not a king who usually let himself be affected by the opinions of his fellow-rulers. It is much more probable that he consented to abandon the charges against Boniface in return for Clement's undertaking to crush the Temple. That undertaking had indeed already been given, but since Clement's

promise investigations into the Order had taken place all over Christendom and the result had been largely in favour of the Temple. The Pope may therefore have represented that, despite all he could do, the Order would be adjudged innocent by the general council of the Church at Vienne. And the Temple must be crushed or Philip would be in a serious situation. Not only would he have the enmity of the remaining Templars, who might combine with the French nobles against him, but he would be called upon to restore the treasure and goods which he had filched from the Order. Moreover, the rehabilitation of the Temple would be a triumph for the Church and during the whole of his reign Philip had striven to weaken the authority of the ecclesiastical power.

But even if the council refused to condemn the Temple, the Order could still be crushed. For the Pope, by virtue of his apostolic powers, might pronounce a sentence of abolition against the Temple. Such a course, however, involved a considerable risk to the pontiff since the council would perhaps rise against him. Philip must ensure that the Order was disbanded, and he had never any hesitation in making other people take risks. But Clement was well aware of the danger to himself, and a powerful inducement must be given to him before he would jeopardise his great position as leader of the Church. The only inducement powerful enough to make Clement risk his tiara was probably Philip's withdrawal from the process against Boniface. Some such compromise may have been reached. At any rate Philip abandoned the charges, insisting, however, that he should be pronounced blameless in everything that he had done in his quarrels with Boniface. Clement saw nothing illogical in solemnly decreeing that Boniface had been pure in faith and admirable in conduct and in ordering all Boniface's Bulls against Philip the Fair to be erased from the papal records. De Nogaret and some of the others who had taken part in the attack on

Boniface were pardoned after a comparatively light penance. An amazed Christendom was assured that Philip had acted like a loyal and loving and obedient son of the Church and that Boniface was a Pope worthy of the greatest veneration!

The Council of Vienne met on October 1st, 1311. Over three hundred high ecclesiastics, including 114 bishops, were present from every country in Christendom. There were three matters to be considered: the affair of the Temple, a Crusade to the Holy Land, and the cleansing of the Church of the abuses which had crept in. Nothing came of the proposal for a renewal of the holy war in the East and the steps taken to reform the Church aroused little interest; but the fate of the Temple was eagerly awaited. Four years had passed since the arrest of the brethren, and their doom and the distribution of their wide properties had been the subject of eager discussions throughout Europe.

While it may have already been decided by Clement and Philip that the Temple should be disbanded by papal provision if the general council of the Church would not act, it would be much more satisfactory if the council could be brought to condemn the Order. The Pope did his best to rally the bishops against the Temple, and opened the proceedings with a bitter attack on the Order. It had been shown to be a den of infamy, he said; its members had confessed to gross blasphemies and had admitted that these were committed in accordance with the Rule of the Order. So awful were the crimes that the Order of the Temple must be abolished, and so overwhelming was the evidence available that no further enquiry was needed.

It was, however, not so easy to destroy the Temple. The Pope had two thousand confessions by Templars as well as numerous depositions by outside witnesses, but what he called proof carried no conviction to the members of the council. Only the three French archbishops—of Sens, Rheims and Rouen—one Italian bishop and a number of the cardinals

supported Clement's proposal that the Temple should be condemned without being called to defend itself. The remainder of the Italian and French ecclesiastics and the bishops of Spain, Germany, England, Scotland and Ireland, while not affirming the innocence of the Order, claimed that the Templars ought to be heard before judgment was passed. Several bishops pointed out that the charges had not been proved except in France, and that it was unfair to abolish an organisation so renowned, so long-established, and so useful to Christianity on the report of an examination in a single country. Clement replied that the Order had been cited, and that no defenders had come forward at Paris. This piece of special pleading was too obviously absurd to be taken seriously for the council was aware that the seven hundred defenders in Paris had been compelled to withdraw their retractions and that their representatives, de Boulogne and de Pruino, had been victimised. The council insisted therefore that the Templars should again be cited to appear in defence of the Order.

Seven Knights Templars, later joined by two others, answered the summons in November. Between 1,500 and 2,000 Templars had, they said, found refuge in the hills near Lyons and were willing to defend the Temple against its accusers. This unexpected complication aroused Clement's indignation. He could not have been ignorant that some of the brethren were still at liberty, but had probably thought that the number was much smaller and that the refugees would not dare to put in a defence. He pretended to be alarmed for his own safety and increased his guard lest an attempt should be made to assassinate him. As for the Templars who had been rash enough to offer themselves as defenders, the Pope ordered them to be arrested and kept in close custody. The council was highly dissatisfied at this treatment and begged that the Templars should be released and allowed to give their testimony. Clement could not

refuse such a reasonable request from the general council, but he feared the effect of permitting the witnesses to be examined. The only other course open to him was to suspend the sittings of the council and shelve the question, and Clement adopted this solution. The sessions were not to be resumed until the spring of 1312.

Meanwhile Philip the Fair had been at Lyons, only a short distance from Vienne, and was well informed of the proceedings. Two thousand Templars were not in themselves a serious menace, but they might find followers if they were resolute. The king wanted immediate action against the Order and he was annoyed at the delay in ending the affair. At the beginning of February, 1312, he called the estates general of France to consult with him at Lyons. The subservient nobles, prelates, and commoners assured the king of their staunch support and demanded the condemnation of the Temple. Under the king, the estates general were the supreme authority in France, but Philip could not expect the general council of the Church to be affected by the shrieking of his tame parliament. The demonstration of the solidarity of French opinion, however, was not for the benefit of the council but of the Pope, and it succeeded in its purpose. Clement was intimidated and expressed himself ready to carry out Philip's instructions.

The council clearly would not condemn the Temple, without, at least, examining witnesses, and it would be dangerous to permit the prelates to hear the tale of torture and hardship, of forged documents and perjured testimony. Condemnation by the council was therefore ruled out, and no other body except the council could condemn an Order of the Church. The only solution was for the Pope to take the responsibility of suppressing the Order.

In February, Philip, his three sons—Louis, King of Navarre, Philip, Count of Poitiers, and Charles, Count de la Marche—and his brother, Charles of Valois, moved from

Lyons to Vienne, accompanied by a small army. The Pope secretly summoned a consistory composed of the cardinals, almost all of whom were under obligations to himself or Philip, and a number of ecclesiastics who were also dupes of the French king. On March 22nd, this consistory approved the suppression of the Temple by way of apostolic provision.

The general council of the Church resumed its sessions on April 3rd. Philip was present to support Clement and the French troops were in the vicinity to crush any opposition. Amid a deep silence, the Pope made known his decision to the bishops. "As we cannot by canon law condemn the Temple, we have decided, not without bitterness and grief of heart, to proceed against the Order by way of provision, with the approbation of the Holy Council and by virtue of our Apostolic authority. We have abolished it and its supporters in perpetuity and we expressly prohibit any person from entering the Order or wearing the habit of the Order or daring to represent himself as a Templar. Anyone who shall presume to act in defiance of this decree is proclaimed excommunicate." The Pope defended himself by saying that the possessions of the Temple had been given for the defence of the Holy Land and that it was necessary that they should be used for that purpose. This could not be done until the future of the Temple had been settled. Evidence to justify a canonical condemnation had not, Clement admitted, been duly presented, but he pointed out that it would take a considerable time to make such an investigation as would satisfy the council and that in the meantime everything would be in confusion. He personally was convinced that the Temple was guilty of terrible offences and he felt justified in using his papal powers to suppress the source of the abomination.

There was not a single dissentient voice. The council was probably relieved that the responsibility had been taken

from it or may have been afraid to protest when Philip's troops were so close. On May 6th Clement issued a Bull in which he announced the abolition of the Temple and commanded the princes to forbid the Order in their territories. Every country except Scotland passed legislation in accordance with the papal Bull. In Scotland, the Temple was united with the Hospital, and the combined Order, under the name of St. John and the Temple, survived until the Reformation. When Sir James Sandilands, the Preceptor of the Order of St. John and the Temple, turned Protestant at the Reformation, the Order was dissolved.

The cunning and unscrupulousness of Philip had overthrown the Temple, but his victory was not complete. Had the Order been condemned as he had hoped, then he might have successfully claimed that the possessions of the Temple should revert to the secular power. As, however, the council had not condemned the Order as heretical, the goods of the Temple must be held at the disposition of the Church. There had been long discussions on the subject between Philip and Clement. A suggestion was made that the lands of the Temple should be returned to their original owners; but that was impracticable as well as repugnant to the king. Clement then urged that, as the riches of the Temple had been contributed for the conquest of the Holy Land, they must be strictly reserved for that end. Philip thought that this could best be done by uniting the existing Orders and endowing the combined organisation with the goods of the Temple; the new Order should be under the direction of one of his sons, who would take the high-sounding title of King of Egypt and Syria. This interesting project came to nothing, and after much haggling it was decreed by the Church that the Hospital should inherit the possessions of the Temple.

To decree was easy, but to secure respect for the papal enactment was impossible. Philip had already seized all the

movable goods of the Order in France and did not mean to surrender them. He was deeply in debt to the Temple, but could a Christian monarch be the debtor of heretics? Philip scoffed at the idea and regarded his debts as cancelled. When the royal financiers made a further investigation, however, they discovered that this was the wrong way to tackle the problem. Philip, they declared, was actually a creditor of the Temple! Charles de Valois, who had also borrowed heavily, likewise insisted that the Temple owed him money. There were endless squabbles. In the spring of 1313 the Hospitallers paid a large sum in compensation to Philip for mythical expenses incurred by the state, and the king promised to transfer the lands and houses of the Temple. This promise was not kept, and Philip enjoyed the revenue of the Temple until his death. Nor would his successor surrender the property of the Temple. Insufficient allowance had been made, he said, for the expenses to the crown of the food and lodging of the Templars during more than four years imprisonment—and for the cost of execution! The Hospital had to pay a further sum, and it is doubtful if the award of the property of their rivals was not a liability rather than an asset.

In other countries the Hospital similarly obtained only part of the properties of the Temple. The kings and princes retained at least part of the movable goods and presented accounts for disbursements on behalf of the Templars which the Hospital had to meet. In England, Edward II and his barons refused to surrender several of the most valuable properties, including the Temple in London, which was later bestowed on the civil lawyers. The Hospital obtained no benefit from the possessions of the Temple in Spain, for Pope Clement had expressly excluded that country from the operation of the decree. The King of Aragon protested to the Pope that, as he had Moors within his own frontiers, the goods of the Temple should be used to finance the war

against these infidels. A new Order, called the Order of Our Lady of Montesa, was therefore established to fight the Moors in Aragon and adopted the Templars' mantle. This Order and other Orders in Spain and Portugal inherited the goods of the Temple.

The fate of the Templars still in prison at the time of the dissolution of the Order had been left to the provincial ecclesiastical councils. Brethren who had made no admission or who, after making a guilty confession, had retracted were treated as obstinate or relapsed, and most of them were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Those who had acknowledged their guilt and clung to their confessions were set at liberty, and many of them granted pensions, which were to be a charge on the possessions of the Order. All vows sworn to the Temple were pronounced null and void, and the released ex-Templars were able to return to civil life. A number of the servants took up manual labour and others eked out an existence on their pensions. The Hospital, which appears to have been highly suspicious of the whole process against the Temple, opened its ranks to the brethren, knights and servants, and many of the Templars assumed the mantle of the Hospitallers.

Clement had always insisted that the great dignitaries of the Order should be reserved for his own judgment, the one thing on which he had never wavered throughout the whole persecution. The Pope, however, avoided any meeting with the principals, although the Grand Master frequently petitioned to be allowed to plead before the pontiff. Clement was still resolved that de Molay and the other leaders should not see him and on December 22nd, 1313, he appointed three commissioners, Arnold de Farges, Arnold Novelli, and Nicholas de Freville to examine the chiefs of the Order in Paris and pronounce judgment upon them. In addition to Jacques de Molay, the officers reserved to the Pope were Geoffrey de Charnay, the Preceptor of

Normandy, Geoffrey de Payraud, the Visitor of the Order in France, and Geoffrey de Gonaville, the Preceptor of Poitou and Aquitaine. The three commissioners, who were assisted by Philip de Marigny, Archbishop of Sens, and other French prelates, summoned de Molay and his fellow-leaders before them at Paris. All four chiefs of the Order had previously admitted themselves guilty of one or more of the charges, though they had retracted later. Now they begged to be pardoned for recanting and confirmed the truth of their original guilty confessions.

Doubtless acting on the instructions of Clement, the papal commissioners decided to sentence the four prisoners to perpetual imprisonment. On March 18th, 1314, a platform was erected before Notre Dame. The accused were brought in chains before the commissioners and their confessions read in the presence of a great crowd of spectators. It was announced that, as the prisoners had acknowledged their guilt and shown sincere penitence for their grave sins, the commissioners wished to act leniently. They therefore sentenced de Molay and his brethren to pass the rest of their lives in captivity! De Payraud and de Gonaville accepted the sentence without question, but de Molay and de Charnay broke out in protest.

The accused Templars had been in prison for six years and felt hopeless of fighting the enemies who had destroyed the power of the Order. They had agreed to confess to a number of the charges and had been promised lenient treatment. But in the opinion of the Church leniency to heretics was perpetual imprisonment, whereas the Templars had thought that they would be released immediately or at most suffer only a short period of confinement. De Payraud and de Gonaville were probably as disappointed as the other chiefs on learning the harsh judgment of the commissioners. They preferred, however, to make no complaint against the sentence since they realised that the alternative might be

the stake. De Molay and de Charnay also realised that they ran the risk of execution, but death seemed to them preferable to a life spent in prison. Before the reading of the judgment was completed, de Molay interrupted: "I think it only right that, at so solemn a moment and when my life has so little time to run, I should reveal the deception which has been practised and speak up for the truth. Before heaven and earth and with all of you here as my witnesses, I admit that I am guilty of the grossest iniquity. But the iniquity is that I have lied in admitting the disgusting charges laid against the Order. I declare, and I must declare, that the Order is innocent. Its purity and saintliness is beyond question. I have indeed confessed that the Order is guilty, but I have done so only to save myself from terrible tortures by saying what my enemies wished me to say. Other knights who have retracted their confessions have been led to the stake, I know; yet the thought of dying is not so awful that I shall confess to foul crimes which have never been committed. Life is offered to me, but at the price of infamy. At such a price life is not worth having. I do not grieve that I must die if life can be bought only by piling one lie upon another."

De Charnay spoke in similar terms, and the crowd, which had been profoundly moved by the declarations and the bearing of the two knights, began to murmur sympathetically. The proceedings were hastily closed and the four prisoners removed to gaol. Philip the Fair was informed of the statements of de Molay and de Charnay and at once summoned a secret council, which decreed that both prisoners should be put to death as relapsed heretics. The Pope had probably no thought of permitting the great officers to be given to the flames; but Philip did not allow any time for consultation with the papacy. He was weary of the whole affair of the Temple, annoyed that he had failed to win complete success and obtain all the possessions of the Order in France, and

this last piece of opposition, which might sway the people of France in favour of the disbanded Templars, aroused him to fury. The Templars were still in the hands of the Church and the Church had not yet handed them over to the temporal power. Philip therefore had no authority to intervene. But lack of authority had never stopped Philip when his interests were threatened. He told the Provost of Paris to relieve the Church of the custody of de Molay and de Charnay.

Next morning, the two Templars were led out to the little island of du Palais on the left of the River Seine. Two stakes had been prepared and there Jacques de Molay and Geoffrey de Charnay were given to the flames. Some chroniclers say that Philip was present and that the Grand Master addressed him, declaring his innocence and repeating that he blamed himself only for the cowardice he had shown in making false confessions. The impassioned declarations of the prisoners and their courage at the stake created a profound impression in Paris, and, had there been resolute men to take advantage of the tide of feeling, rebellion against Philip might have been organised. But the Templars were scattered and popular fervour soon wanes unless it is controlled and fed.

The ashes of the victims were collected and carefully preserved as sacred relics—relics which did not fail to work great miracles. Many legends sprang up around de Molay. With his last breath he is alleged to have cried, "Clement, wicked Pope and perjured judge, I summon you to appear before the tribunal of God within forty days; and you, Philip, cruel king, before that same tribunal within a year". (Clement died in less than a month—April 20th—and Philip on November 29th of the same year.) The most fabulous story of all is that de Molay appointed a Grand Master to succeed him and that the Temple has existed until the present day in unbroken line; there is an organisation which calls

itself the Temple, but the Order founded in Jerusalem eight centuries ago died with de Molay. Some historians have claimed the Freemasons as the true successors of the Templars, but their arguments are more ingenious than convincing.

The guilt or innocence of the Order of the Temple must for ever remain a mystery. Philip IV of France has had many admirers. He built up a national spirit in France, broke the power of the feudal aristocracy, and curbed the Church; he was the first French king to summon the commoners and to foster the power of the civil lawyers. If achievement can be considered apart from moral worth, he was in some ways a very great king. The admirers of a monarch to whom France owed so much have refused to believe that their hero could be guilty of the unjust persecution of an innocent Order to serve his own selfish ends. The Templars, they say, are self-condemned, and two thousand guilty confessions are sufficient in themselves to establish the offences. Papal writers also maintain that the result of the examination conclusively demonstrates the guilt of the Temple—any other view would reflect upon Clement V and the justice of the Church.

No documentary evidence whatever was produced against the Templars at any of the enquiries in France or elsewhere, and no documentary proof against them has ever been found. Almost all the records of the Order were destroyed by the command of the Pope and Philip, and most of what remained after the suppression of the Temple was edited by apologists for the monarchy or the papacy, and edited consequently with the view of maintaining the guilt of the Order. The record of the examination by the papal commission at Paris and of the examinations before the Inquisition and the ecclesiastical tribunals in some countries have, however, been preserved. But few of the depositions are to be trusted since numerous complaints of perjury and falsification were made,

and the evidence to which complete credence can be given is so slight that no judgment can be formed on it with confidence.

The testimony on which the Templars were condemned and the Order was abolished would not satisfy the least exacting of modern juries; but a modern jury is not the criterion. The main charges against the brethren were the denial of Christ, indecent kisses, homosexuality, idolatry and receiving absolution from the Grand Master and other chiefs of the Order. Almost every Templar strenuously denied the worship of idols. Those who had seen or had heard of an idol were confused and contradictory in their descriptions. Some said it was a cat, others swore that it was a human head; some said it was about the size of a man, others that it was less than a foot in height; the head was reported to be of gold, of silver, and of wood; it had four legs, it had two legs; it had no eyes, it had carbuncles for eyes, it had eyes which shone strangely; it was red, it was blue, it was multi-coloured. A number of witnesses are stated to have testified that the Temple in France had only a single idol, which was taken from chapter to chapter; and, if so, the discrepancies in its description are highly suspicious. Most witnesses who admitted knowledge of idolatry, however, claimed that the Temple possessed many idols. It is incredible that, if there were a number of idols, all of them could have disappeared so conveniently, especially as the arrest of the brethren and the seizure of their property took place secretly and on the same day in several countries. The most careful search was made for signs of idolatry and both Philip and Clement would have given a rich reward to anyone who found a black cat or an idol of any kind, but the only head produced was one recognised as a religious relic. It seems clear that the charge of idolatry was quite without foundation.

Permission to practice homosexuality was admitted by only a few of the witnesses. It is not improbable, however, that

the practice was authorised in some houses of the Temple. Sodomy was not uncommon in the East and did not arouse the detestation that it did in Europe. An important point is the number of Templars who frankly repeated the form of permission to engage in homosexuality under examination, and only realised the significance of the words when the examiners explained them. While, however, there exists a suspicion that homosexuality was in fact allowed in some preceptories, the evidence that the brethren engaged in it is negligible.

Much play was made with the charge that the Grand Master and other chiefs of the Order usurped the functions of the priest by giving absolution and extended the absolution to unconfessed sins. It seems very likely that confusion arose between absolution for sins and forgiveness for disciplinary offences. The words used by the dignitaries at the end of the chapter were stated by a considerable number of witnesses to be: "The sins you have, either through shame or fear, failed to confess, we, in accordance with the authority bestowed on us by God and the Pope, forgive you, so far as we are able". This formula could be interpreted in two ways, but while some brethren deposed that they took the words to mean that they were absolved for their sins, whether confessed or not, the weight of the evidence supports the view that the brethren generally regarded the Master as referring only to breaches of discipline. When questioned on this point, the leaders of the Order were emphatic in contesting the charge that they abrogated to themselves the duties of the priesthood.

The Rule of the Order laid down that a recruit should be given the kiss of peace on reception. Many Templars admitted that on their reception they were forced to give kisses on the navel and elsewhere, and this evidence is probably true. The practice seems to have been widespread, especially in France, but attempts to prove that the Rule

prescribed such indecencies failed completely. The obscenity was characteristic of the age. It was nothing more than a piece of childish grossness—the sort of jest that may have originated with some vulgar Receiver and spread to other houses. Several witnesses treated the kisses as a joke; the description given by others suggests that, while they regarded the kisses as disgusting, the Receiver and his satellites derived considerable fun from imposing this coarse pleasantry on novices. Initiation ceremonies of certain societies in our own day are not free of grossness.

The denial of Christ and the spitting on the cross were admitted by hundreds of Templars in France. Historians who are satisfied that the Templars were guilty of these offences have put forward several interesting theories regarding them. The recruit, it is pointed out, had given up everything to the Order; he had transferred all his goods, had turned his back on his friends and relations, and sworn to submit himself unconditionally to the Temple and be its slave. His secular clothes were stripped from him and, naked, he knelt before the Receiver. He was given the Templar's mantle and equipment and from henceforward he owed everything to the Order. But one thing he had left—his religion. That, too, must be surrendered so that the Templar should have no consolation apart from the Order. Christ, the hope of his salvation, had therefore to be renounced. Other writers have suggested that the denial was a piece of depraved humour like the indecent kisses. Faith was strong in the Middle Ages, but so, too, was the delight in coarse blasphemy. The novice, whom everything had impressed with the solemnity of his entry into a great Order which had fought for Christ on a thousand fields, has taken upon himself the responsibilities of a stern religious Rule. Now, like a thunderbolt, comes the demand that he should deny Christ and spit on His image. He is told that it is the final proof of his submission and that he must “obey like a

dead corpse", whatever the command of his superior. When he refuses, he is assured that the denial need not be in his heart, or he is allowed to spit beside the cross—if the witnesses are correct, nearly all of them avoided spitting on the cross, and the Receivers, who could not have been blind, were apparently satisfied. This suggests that the denial and spitting were not taken seriously by the Receivers. The recruits at any rate did not feel that they were no longer soldiers of Christ after undergoing the ceremony. They laid down their lives with His name on their lips, they chose death rather than renounce Christ before the Moslems, and many of them spent long years in the prisons of Syria and Egypt because they would not declare their Saviour to be a false prophet.

Such theorists assume the truth of the confessions of the Templars in France. Many of those who confessed to the denial and spitting, however, retracted their guilty confessions as soon as the Church took charge of the affair and the papal commission opened its proceedings, and they adhered to their original confessions only after Philip the Fair had put the prisoners in a state of extreme terror by sending over a hundred brethren to the stake. A great difficulty has been to explain why, if these charges were unfounded, so many Templars admitted them when they strenuously contested other charges, such as idolatry. The solution is probably that, in the early examinations, the inquisitors concentrated on crimes which left no trace and needed no apparatus. Idolatry necessarily involved the use of idols and not a single idol was discovered. In later examinations, the prisoners were for the most part asked only whether they confirmed or revoked their original depositions. It is significant that the brethren who died at Paris proclaimed their innocence to the last, although all of them could have saved their lives by reverting to their former confessions.

It is rare for a large number of men who are guilty to declare their innocence when they can buy their lives by

acknowledging their offences, rarer still when the accused have previously made guilty admissions. The argument is advanced that, even if the hundred and twenty brethren who died in Paris were ignorant of the apostasy, it does not prove that other Templars were equally blameless. But such an argument destroys itself. Most of the executed Templars had confessed to the offences at one time. If they are accepted as innocent, their earlier depositions must be utterly false. And if this is acknowledged, then every single one of the early depositions must likewise be dismissed. Some brethren said that they had told priests, not attached to the Order, how they had denied Christ on their reception. It is hard to believe that so abominable a crime would not have been reported to the Church had even a few priests learned of it. According to the evidence, the form of initiation was used at many houses, at which hundreds of Templars were received every year. The Temple attracted men from the noblest families, often the recruits were deeply pious, and so degrading a ceremony would have been bound to cause horror among the majority of those who came to the Temple. The indictment tried to get over the difficulty by alleging that those who refused to deny were killed or imprisoned, but scores of Templars must therefore have disappeared every month. To accept such a conclusion is impossible.

It is a reasonable presumption that at some of the houses the brethren were guilty of grossness, though of nothing more. Not the slightest piece of trustworthy testimony was tendered that the Order as a whole was tainted. The general council of the Church rejected the papal plea for a condemnation, and the Pope, recognising the weakness of the case, dared not permit an impartial examination by the council. Those who in the Middle Ages were convinced of the guilt of the Order by the screeching of Philip's propagandists and the thunders of the papacy sought no explanation other than the inherent wickedness of mankind and looked no further than the con-

fessions of the brethren. Five centuries later, however, the question of the crimes of the Temple was revived, and several theories were put forward to prove and interpret the iniquities of the Order. Some investigators have found in the buildings and on articles used by the Templars representations of symbols associated with gnosticism and other heresies, and on such evidence have denounced the Order as guilty. Other historians explain the denial of Christ as showing that the Templars were deists. The Manicheans regarded the cross as diabolical, and the insults to the crucifix alleged against the Templars are interpreted as proving that the brethren followed this heretical teaching.

The orthodoxy of the Temple is claimed to have been undermined by the influx of heretics during the thirteenth century, especially the Albigensians, a number of whom found refuge in the Order after the Crusade against them. The theory most frequently advanced, however, is that the Templars were infected with heresy through living in the East on terms of intimacy with the adherents of other religions. A number of the leaders are said to have turned to Islam and introduced Moslem practices throughout the Temple. It is undeniable that there was close friendship between the chiefs of the Temple and a number of Moslem sultans at various times and that the brethren showed less fervour for the holy war in later years. The tolerance which the Order exhibited towards the infidel was bound to be distasteful to the Church and the fanatical Christians, and it may be true that the Temple included in its ranks brethren who had adopted the Moslem religion. That the Order as a whole was heretical, however, is not only incapable of proof, but is contrary to all presumption. Equally improbable is the theory that the Temple followed the secret doctrines of the Assassins.

The assailants of the Temple forestall the criticism that heresy could not safely have been disseminated among the

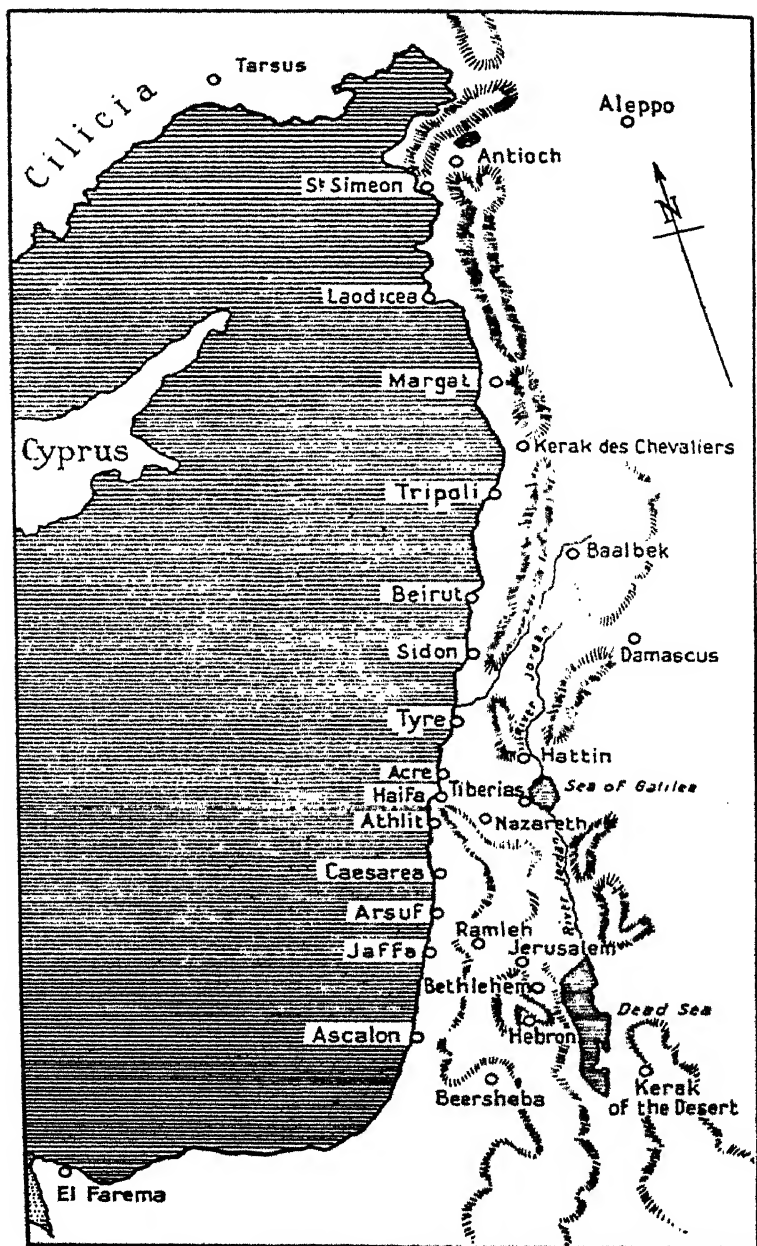
thousands of men who composed the Order. They suggest that only a small directing group within the Temple held to heretical tenets while most of the brethren were, at least in the early stages of their service, ignorant of the apostasy of the chiefs. Only when a brother had given years to the Order and been adjudged fit for the revelation was he initiated into the inner circle, which was anti-Christian or athiest or taught some form of philosophical truth. The initiates pretended to support the teachings of the Roman Church because they believed that religion was proper for the vulgar; but they themselves despised Christianity and Mahometanism as equally fallacious and either had no faith in a divinity or were pure deists. This teaching is said to have been contained in a secret Rule, which laid down the renunciation of Christ as a condition of membership of the inner circle.

The only Rule—and it was secret from all except the very highest officers—is, however, orthodox in every way. The story of the renunciation rests on testimony which is suspect, but, if it be accepted as true, the testimony proves conclusively that members were required to deny Christ, not after long service in the Order, but immediately on their deception. No witness who admitted the renunciation deposed that it was confined to a limited class of members and only half a dozen in all said that the test was imposed some time after their entry into the Temple. One very cogent submission against the idea of a mysterious circle is that not a single member, high or low, acknowledged a secret cult. The Manicheans, the Gnostics, the Patarins had gone to their deaths boasting of their belief, but no Templar defied his judges and welcomed martyrdom for his alleged illicit faith. The brethren led to the flames proclaimed their orthodoxy again and again and affirmed their belief in the teachings of the Roman Church to the end. Were the Templars heretics, surely some of them, when tied to the stake if not before,

would have proudly acknowledged their heresy and proclaimed the superiority of their teachings over the belief of the vulgar. It is strange that the publicists of Philip IV did not circulate the tale that some of the victims had boldly stood up for a wicked faith.

Despite the tremendous efforts made by Philip and Clement to convince Christendom of the guilt of the Temple, contemporary opinion outside France considered the Order as sacrificed by a poltroon pope to appease a rapacious king, and even in France in the fourteenth century many people were not deceived. Most modern historians agree in acquitting the Temple of heresy and all the graver charges of the indictment. Guilty or innocent, the Order would have escaped suppression had Philip the Fair been less ambitious or Clement V more resolute. And had the Temple survived, it might have had a splendid destiny. A strong papal army might perhaps have protected the spiritual power from many misfortunes, might have become a potent instrument for peace. This organisation of soldier monks, powerful in every country in Christendom, free from the dictation of the princes, might have developed into an international police force and saved the world from great tragedies. But it might also have developed into an instrument of oppression in the hands of the Church. The might-have-beens of history are dangerous.

The Knights Templars represented the highest ideal of the Middle Ages. For two centuries the blood of the brethren was joyfully poured out for what they felt to be the most wonderful of all things—the custody of Jerusalem. The Templars failed to hold the Holy City, and seven centuries were to pass before it was restored to Christian rule. On December 11, 1917, when Allenby's troops marched into Jerusalem, the Knights Templars were not forgotten. In the Temple Church of London, the effigies of the crusading warriors were crowned with laurels.



Syria and the Holy Land.

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INDEX

A

- Acre, 14, 35, 110-114, 117, 132, 163,
184, 189, 193-197
Akabah, 102
Albigensians, 129, 130
Aleppo, 121
Alexander III, Pope, 71, 72, 141, 214
Alice of Antioch, 39
Alphonse of Poitiers, 183, 184, 187
Amalric I, King of Jerusalem, 75-80
Amalric II, King of Jerusalem, 122, 131
Antioch, 11, 15, 89, 202
Arnold de Torroges, 100
Arsuf, 14, 192
Assassins, 79, 80, 188, 189
Ascalon, 52-54, 82, 89, 115
Assizes of Jerusalem, 87-97
Azotus, 14

B

- Baldwin I, King of Jerusalem, 11, 13-19,
86, 88
Baldwin II, King of Jerusalem, 24, 25,
34, 36, 38-40
Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem, 42,
51-53, 70, 74, 75
Baldwin IV, King of Jerusalem, 80, 98,
99, 101
Baldwin V, King of Jerusalem, 101
Baldwin I, Emperor of Constantinople,
126, 127
Baldwin II, Emperor of Constantinople,
167, 183
Barbacan, 164-166
Beauséant, 45
Benedict XI, Pope, 230, 231
Berenger de Fredol, 272, 280
Bernard of Tremelay, 52-54

- Bernard of Clairvaux, 25, 27-31, 45
Bertrand de Blanquefort, 70, 78
Bertrand de Sartiges, 304, 307, 311, 321
Bibars, Sultan of Egypt, 185, 186, 190,
191, 194, 200
Bohemund I, Prince of Antioch, 11, 39
Bohemund II, Prince of Antioch, 39
Boniface of Montferrat, 125, 126
Boniface VIII, Pope, 221-230, 237, 242,
245, 271, 277, 278, 327, 328-330

C

- Cæsarea, 14, 66, 189, 192
Celestine III, Pope, 121
Celestine V, Pope, 221-223
Charles of Anjou, 183, 193, 218, 219, 220
Clement IV, Pope, 192, 218, 219, 233
Clement V, Pope, 231, 232, 236, 237,
245-247, 254, 257, 263, 265-273,
276-282, 285, 286, 290, 291, 293,
317-318, 326-335, 338-341
Colonna, 220-224, 229, 230, 232
Conrad III, Emperor of Germany,
45-50, 212
Conrad IV, Emperor of Germany, 217
Conrad of Montferrat, 114, 117, 118
Conradin, 217, 218
Constance of Antioch, 39

D

- Dagobert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, 13,
16, 17, 19
Damascus, 49, 50, 121, 128, 136, 162,
163, 188-190, 199, 207
Damietta, 132-134, 137, 183-186
Dieudonné, Abbot of Lagny, 282
Dirgham, 75

W

E

- Eleanor of Aquitaine, 45, 47
 Edessa, 11, 15, 42-44
 Edward I, 192-194, 207, 215
 Edward II, 269, 270, 285, 286
 El Kamel, Sultan of Egypt, 134-137,
 156, 158-160
 Enguerrand de Marigny, 244, 310
 Eugenius III, Pope, 45
 Everard des Barres, 46, 52

F

- Frederick I, Emperor of Germany, 71,
 111, 212-215
 Frederick II, Emperor of Germany, 131,
 136, 152-159, 162, 164, 165, 167,
 172, 182, 215-217
 Fulk, King of Jerusalem, 23, 41, 42

G

- Gaza, 162, 167, 168
 Genoa, 35, 91, 191
 Geoffrey de Charnay, 257, 279, 280
 Geoffrey de Gonaville, 279-280
 Gerard of Ridefort, 101-105, 110
 Gerold, Patriarch of Jerusalem, 157
 Gilbert Horal, 121
 Gilles d'Aisselin, Archbishop of
 Narbonne, 291, 297, 301, 306, 311
 Godfrey de Bouillon, 10-13, 87
 Godfrey de St. Omer, 21, 26, 27
 Gregory IX, Pope, 154, 155, 217
 Guy of Lusignan, 99-107, 110-114,
 116-118

H

- Hadrian IV, Pope, 213
 Henry I, 140
 Henry II, 99, 100, 103, 109, 111, 140
 Henry VI, Emperor of Germany, 121,
 215
 Hittin, 104, 105, 117
 Honorius II, Pope, 26-28, 212

- Honorius III, Pope, 132
 Honorius IV, Pope, 220
 Hospital, 18, 19, 40, 72, 77-86, 99-102,
 104, 105, 112, 118-122, 130,
 133-137, 153-162, 165-173, 183-
 185, 188, 189, 193-196, 199,
 205-209, 234-346, 239, 240, 244,
 335-337
 Hugh de Payens, 20, 21, 25-29, 34, 37,
 39, 40, 140
 Hugh de Payraud, 257, 259-261, 272,
 279, 295, 338
 Hugh of Champagne, 111

I

- Innocent III, Pope, 123, 124, 215
 Innocent IV, Pope, 167, 217

J

- Jacob's Ford, 98
 Jacobites, 15
 Jacques de Molay, 209, 210, 232-236,
 250, 257-259, 278-280, 295-301,
 317, 338-340
 Jacques de Vitry, 134
 Jaffa, 89, 114-116, 122, 155, 156, 162,
 189, 192
 Jerusalem, City of, 7, 18, 38, 44, 51,
 106-108, 114, 116, 124, 157, 160,
 164, 189, 207, 209
 Jerusalem, Kingdom of, 13, 15, 34, 35,
 38, 79, 85-97, 160, 202
 John de Jamville, 293
 John de Mantua, Archdeacon of Trent,
 291
 John de Montlaur, 291
 John, King of Jerusalem, 130-137, 157,
 160, 207
 Jules de Villaret, 233

K

- Kerak de Montreal, 86
 Khorasmians, 164-166

L

- Leopold of Austria, 111
 Louis of Blois, 124
 Louis VII, King of France, 45-50, 71
 Lucius III, Pope, 214, 215

M

- Malek el Afdal, 102
 Malek Shah, 10
 Margaret, Queen of Hungary, 121
 Martin IV, Pope, 220
 Maronites, 15
 Marseilles, 35, 91

N

- Nestorians, 15
 Nicholas III, Pope, 220
 Nouredin, 74-80

O

- Octavian, anti-pope, 71
 Odo de St. Amand, 78, 80, 82, 83
 Orsini, 220, 221
 Otto of Brunswick, 215, 216

P

- Paschal II, Pope, 19
 Pelagius, 133-137
 Peter de Boulogne, 304, 307, 308, 311,
 315, 321
 Philip Augustus, 108, 109, 112-114,
 120, 121, 130
 Philip de Marigny, 310-316, 320, 321
 Philip de Voher, 293, 302, 313
 Philip Duplessis, 128
 Philip of Naplous, 78
 Philip of Swabia, 215, 216, 225-256,
 263-282, 291-293
 Philip IV, King of France, 225-256,
 263-282, 291-293
 Pisa, 91, 191
 Ponsard de Gisi, 295

R

- Raymond I, Prince of Tripoli, 11, 47
 Raymond II, Prince of Tripoli, 79
 Raymond III, Prince of Tripoli, 80, 81,
 101, 103
 Raymond, Prince of Antioch, 39
 Reception of Templars, 149-152
 Reginald de Chatillon, 102, 104, 105
 Reginald de Vichier, 187
 Reynald de Pruino, 304, 305, 307, 311,
 315, 321
 Reynold de Lamporte, 291
 Richard I, 111-116, 120, 121, 140
 Richard of Cornwall, 163-165
 Robert de Sabloil, 114
 Robert le Craon, 41
 Robert of Artois, 183, 185, 186
 Robert of Flanders, 9
 Rule of the Temple, 55-67, 165-181

S

- St. Louis, 183-192, 207
 Saladin, 75, 80-82, 98, 101-108,
 110-112, 114, 121
 Saladin tithe, 109, 110
 Saphadin, 121, 122, 128-130
 Sequin de Florian, 244, 255
 Shawar, 75-77
 Shirkah, 75-77
 Sicard de Vaur, 282
 Sicily, 112
 Sicilian Vespers, 220
 Sidon, 14
 Simon de Montfort, 124
 Sinan ibn Suliman, 79
 Stephen de Suizi, 272, 280

T

- Tancred 11, 39
 Terricus, 105-107
 Teutonic Knights, 111, 155, 157, 166,
 167, 172, 173, 183-185, 194,
 205-207, 250

Theobald of Champagne, 162
 Thibault, Count of Blois, 99
 Tiberias, 103
 Tripoli, 15, 89, 202
 Turan Shah, Sultan of Egypt, 186
 Tyre, 34, 35, 122

U

Urban II, Pope, 7, 8, 211
 Urban III, Pope, 215
 Urban IV, Pope, 218

V

Venice, 35, 91, 125
 Visitors General, 141-144

W

William de Beaujeu, 195, 196, 300
 William de Chambonnet, 304, 307, 311,
 321

William de la More, 270, 284, 288, 319
 William de Nogaret, 228, 229, 244, 247,
 250, 300, 327, 328
 William de Plasian, 244, 299, 301, 327,
 328
 William de Sonnac, 182-186
 William de Trie, 291, 292
 William Duranty, 291, 292
 William Imbert, 249, 252-257, 261,
 263-265, 267
 William of Chartres, 132, 133
 William of Montferrat, 99

Z

Zara, 125, 126
 Zenghi, 39, 41, 42, 51

12526
G-25.
6